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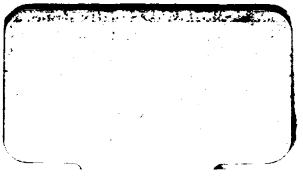

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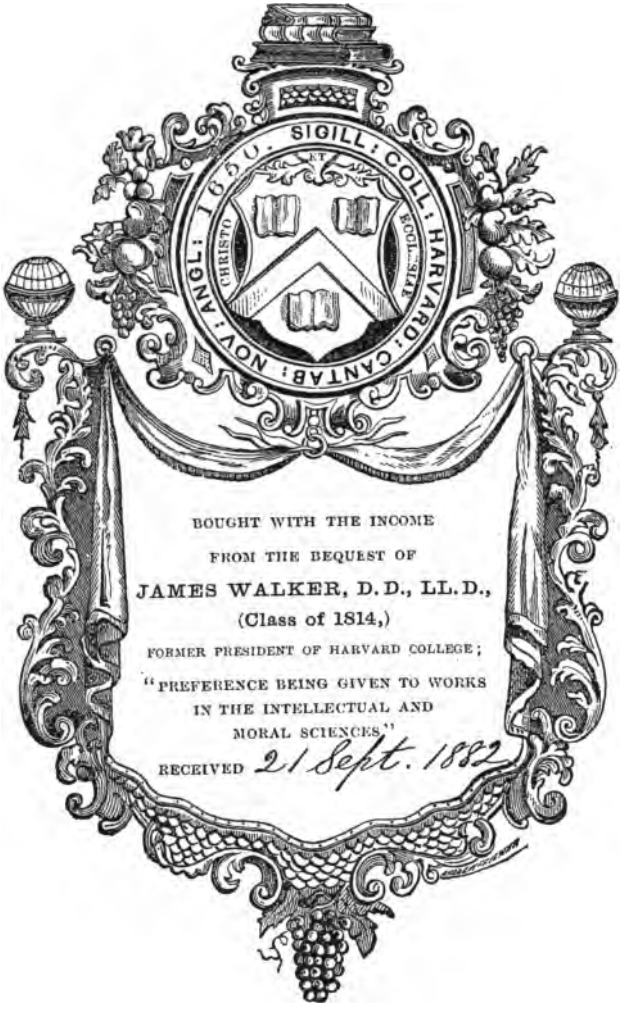

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MY PORTFOLIO

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

BY

AUSTIN PHELPS, D.D.

LATE PROFESSOR IN ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, AUTHOR OF "MEN AND BOOKS" AND "THE THEORY OF PREACHING"

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1882

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PREFACE.

THE papers here republished are a selection of articles printed during the last few years in the columns of "The Congregationalist," "The Independent," "The Christian Union," and "The Sunday School Times." The reception which has been given to them encourages me to believe that their usefulness may be extended in their present form.

A minister who is the son of a minister finds no other element in his professional training so valuable as the influence, obvious or latent, of his father. The mental life-stream flows from father to son with a more electric continuity than is often realized in any other profession. The consequent sense of filial obligation grows more profound with increasing years. It is with this consciousness of the very large place held in my own professional life by the colloquial instructions of my father, that I have given to his remarkable ministry the first portion of this volume.

AUSTIN PHELPS.

ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.
September, 1882.

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MY PORTFOLIO.

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My Portfolio.

I.

A PASTOR OF THE LAST GENERATION.

PART I.

When a man of God, who has been blessed in his work above the average of ministers, outlives his own generation, and the "cloud" of extreme old age has "received him out of our sight," may not filial reverence be pardoned in its desire to tell the living, and specially the youthful, ministry what manner of man he was? Thus would I pay my last earthly tribute to my venerable father, by speaking of him to my younger brethren and my late pupils.

The Rev. Eliakim Phelps, D.D., died on the twenty-ninth day of December, 1880, at the residence of one of his sons in Weehawken, N.J., at the age of ninety years and nine months. He was of English Puritan descent through both father and mother. His was the seventh generation of the family name in this country. The

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first, the Hon. William Phelps, emigrated only ten years after the sailing of "The Mayflower." That Hon. William the family hold in great reverence. He was one of the leaders of the colony which marched from Dorchester through the unbroken wilderness to found the town of Windsor in Connecticut, in 1635. There he became a man of mark, as Stiles's "History" says, in both Church and State. He was one of the eight, who, by authority of the Massachusetts Legislature, constituted the first legislative and judicial body of the infant settlements of Connecticut.

The religious and political heritage of the family may be inferred from the fact, that several of them received grants of land from Oliver Cromwell, and that John, a younger brother of the pioneer William, was secretary to the Protector in 1654. At the Restoration he fled to Connecticut, where he lived in hiding, as the family legend reads, with the regicides Whalley and Goffe. Afterwards he went to Switzerland, and died at Vevay. Such were the ancestral memories which pervaded the home of my father's childhood. They gave him an almost intolerant antipathy to prelacy in all forms. Grim ancestors from the bar of Lord Jeffreys looked out through all his opinions of church government. He took great satisfaction in the fact that the blood of men persecuted by Laud and Strafford ran in his veins.

His father was a plain farmer in Hampshire County, Massachusetts; but he was one of the

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natural chiefs so often found in New-England towns, whose force of character lifts them into leadership in all local affairs. He was the perpetual selectman, moderator, counselor, referee, representative in the "Great and General Court," as the Legislature of Massachusetts was then respectfully entitled in the nomenclature of the hills. He represented Belchertown in that body for sixteen successive years. He bore striking resemblance in person and character to the Hon. Jeremiah Mason, late of the Boston bar.

One of the earliest and latest impressions I received of my father was that of his pardonable, though sometimes amusing, pride of family. Pardonable, because their knightly escutcheon, so dear to English blood; and their descent in the shadowy past from the Italian "Welfs," — the German "Guelphs" of historic fame, — and their connection thus with the regnant house of Hanover on the throne of Great Britain; and the perilous service of one of them in high office near the person of Cromwell; and their kindred, in the person of my father's grandmother, with Lady Jane Grey, whose name she bore, — were all merged and submerged, in his thoughts, in the *one* more than royal distinction, that, as far back as the family name could be traced in historic record, every one in his own branch of it had been either a minister or other dignitary of the Church of Christ. It was a life-long cause of gratulation to him that he inherited the blood of eight generations

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of Christian ministers and deacons. This fact I have known ever since I can remember. The gewgaws of ancestral fame before mentioned I did not hear of till I was near manhood; and some of them I then learned not from him, but from the comments of an English visitor on our family door-plate.

I have never known a man — I have known a few women — who had a more profound reverence than he had for the office and work of a Christian pastor. To him they were above all other dignities on earth. He honestly believed that the pastoral office had no superior. He refused to advise my exchange of a pastoral pulpit for a professorship at Andover. When he called on Gen. Jackson, then President of the United States, his associates were amused at the stately repose with which he greeted the nation's head. To be a preacher of the gospel was a loftier honor than to be a prince of the blood-royal. So pervasive was this conviction in the atmosphere of his household, that I distinctly remember my resolve, before I was four years old, that I would become a minister; not so much because the ministry was my father's guild, as because he had taught me nothing above that to which ambition could aspire. Was not ours the house of Aaron, and ours the tribe of Levi?

In a New-England inland town three-quarters of a century ago, it was a decree fore-ordained, that such a youth as he was should find or make his way to the college and the pulpit. It was one

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of the prerogatives of a Congregational pastor to *fore*see the predestined clergymen among the youth of his charge. It was in the religious faith of a New-England family that such a predestination must be executed, at whatever cost to them. My father's pastor set the prophetic eye on him at the "spelling-bees," which were the climax of the examinations at the village schoolhouse. My father commonly led off one of the contending battalions, under the pastor's imperial review. Samuel to the sons of Kish was hardly more authoritative.

Thus called, "as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God," he saw only a question of time. He went through the hardships of poverty, which have made so many of our New-England clergy self-reliant and original theologians. Being one of nine children compelled to hatchel a living from a Hampshire County hill-farm of about two hundred acres, rocks and whortleberries included, he could receive but little aid from his father. He worked at the rocks and the whortleberries till he was nineteen years of age. He has often pointed out to me the bowlders which he blasted to make a rude mountain-road from the homestead to the turnpike. That road was like the road to Jerusalem. It was the only avenue from the farm to the two chief essentials of existence to a Yankee family, — the schoolhouse and the church.

In summers he reaped the rye-field with a hand-sickle; wheat being a rare luxury, reserved for

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the honor of hospitality, or as the honest mother, not adroit of speech, used to express it, "for *fear* somebody should come." He either attended or "kept" the district school three months in the winters. He held the plow with a Latin grammar tucked under his waistband, and conjugated "*amo*" while the oxen rested at the end of the furrow. One of the first tokens which his father detected of the son's destiny was the discovery that "Eliakim," with the same yoke of oxen, could not plow as large a patch of ground in a day as his younger brother. He did not overwork the oxen. Twice a week he walked three miles and a half, after his day's work was done, to recite to his pastor in the evening, trudging back again in the moonlight or the storm, as it might happen.

In his twentieth winter, after chopping wood with his brothers from dawn to twilight, he read a second-hand Virgil at night, lying flat on the kitchen-floor, before the huge old-fashioned fireplace, while his brothers and sisters were hatcheling flax around him. They were too thrifty to burn other lights than that of the pine-knots which they had providently saved from the wood-pile of the summer before. He thus created a perpetual weeping of one eye, which discouraged scholarly tastes in him through life, and became the theme of friendly banter, when, thirty years later, he used to address the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. His introductory gesture was usually a comical slap at his weeping eye.

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He went to college in a homespun suit from the fleece of the sheep he had washed and sheared; he wore stout brogans made by an itinerant cobbler from the hide of the cow he had milked and fatted; having made with his own hands, of boards from the tree he had felled, the paper-lined trunk which contained his scanty wardrobe and more scanty library.

In such privations, not thought of as self-denials, the foundations of the man were laid. Wordsworth's "plain living and high thinking" are seldom more grandly illustrated than in the unconscious heroism of many of our New-England youth on their way from the plow to the pulpit. Dr. Sprague's "Annals of the American Pulpit" indicate that a large majority of the successful ministers of the last generation went through the discipline of the straitened purse and the frugal home. We who have never known any other than homes of ease and culture know very little of the cost of our inheritance. They were great men, who amidst the adjuncts of manual labor only, and the talk about beeves and swine, with scarcely an intellectual stimulus in their homes, except the report from the town-meeting, and the daily prayer, and the word of God, *began* the line of culture in their families. That is a costly heritage which they have transmitted in gentle blood to their children and their children's children. It may take, as wise men tell us, three generations to turn out a scholar thoroughbred; but all honor

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to him, who, in obedience to the cravings of an aspiring spirit, heads the trio.

My father entered, well fitted for those times, the sophomore class of Brown University in 1811. After two years of study he was attracted, by the then splendid fame of Dr. Nott, to Union College, where he graduated, with an honorary oration, in 1814. Among his collegiate associates were the Rev. Benjamin B. Wisner, D.D., of the Old South Church, Boston; the Rev. Francis Wayland, D.D., president of Brown University; the Rev. Joel Hawes, D.D., of Hartford; and the late President of the United States, Martin Van Buren.

He was one of a class of sixteen, formed as the nucleus of a theological seminary at Schenectady, but which was soon transferred, and became the well-known seminary at Auburn, N.Y. His chief theological training he received from Dr. Nott and Dr. Yates of Union College. The theology of Dr. Nott was — what it was. To his pupil it seemed very slippery: he could not grasp it. That of Dr. Yates was the Confession of Dort pure and simple. With him the young theologue held stout controversy in the "Conflict of the Ages." He could repeat the Westminster Catechism by heart when he was twelve years old. But the theology of his manhood, both of heart and head, he fashioned for himself in those friendly jousts with Dr. Yates. It was New England grappling with Old Holland. The young Puritan fought it out as if nobody had ever crossed swords in the same fight before. He

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built his theology as if he were laying the foundations of the world *de novo*. In temperament, and by necessity of original make, he was a "New-School man." If he had been trained to an adamantine interpretation of the Confession of Dordrecht, before President Edwards was born, he would have floundered out of it, in some way, into some equivalent of the "New-England theology." He was to that "manner born." Yet to his consciousness every iota of it was a discovery of his own. That which Froude says of Latimer was true of him, — "He was not an echo, but a voice."

In this, as in some other things, he strongly resembled the late Rev. Dr. Finney of Oberlin. The theological elements were so compacted in the intellectual make of both of them, that no drill of the schools, and no authority of council or synod, could ever have made a high Calvinist of either. In those conversational encounters with Dr. Yates, Dr. Phelps was unconsciously preparing for the part he afterwards acted in opposition to the disruption of the Presbyterian Church in 1837–1838.

He read theology also, for a while, with the Rev. Dr. Wittar of Wilbraham, Mass. I am unable to find traces of the influence of that estimable pastor in the subsequent life of his pupil. I suspect that the magnet which drew him secretly to Wilbraham was, that, in the choir of the village church, the young and beautiful one was waiting for his coming, who became the helpmeet of his ministry

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for nearly thirty years, and whom he gratefully recognized as his superior in power with God. Of her, not long before his death, when memory, dying to other things, grew young again to that golden age, he said, "Nine and twenty years we walked together, and I never knew her to do a wrong thing, or to say an unwise one."

A son is a less impartial judge of a mother's character than of that of a father. Are there any mothers who are not Madonnas? But disinterested observers of this one have told me that her remarkable judgment, her reticence of speech, and her pre-eminent religious culture, well deserved her husband's tribute. The promise, "He shall give his angels charge over thee," was fulfilled to him in the presence of one ministering spirit in earthly form. He was one of the many successful pastors who owe their success largely to prudent and godly wives. He was one of the few who have grace to see and acknowledge the obligation.

He was licensed to preach by the Congregational Association of ministers of Windham County, Connecticut. It was his purpose to seek a settlement in the then destitute regions of "the West." This probably meant Western New York, which was then rapidly filling up with families from New England, or, at the farthest, Ohio, where exploring missionaries were then traversing forests by the aid of blazed trees. But by one of those minute providences which turn the little rill of a man's career far back near its trickling springs,

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he was invited to supply the pulpit of the church in West Brookfield, Mass., for two sabbaths, while another man, to whom a "call" had been given, should deliberate and decide upon his answer. The result was, that he became the pastor of that ancient church, as colleague with the Rev. Dr. Ward, in 1816.

That church was then composed, to a considerable extent, of members who had been admitted under the "Halfway Covenant." The youthful pastor gave unmistakable token of his future by making it a condition of his settlement that that disastrous usage should be abolished. The change could not be achieved by a vote. It encountered bitter opposition, and was a long process. But he was sustained by the best element in the church, at the head of which he reckoned his powerful and constant friend, the Hon. Judge Foster, grandfather of the Hon. Dwight Foster, late of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. The private counsel, as well as the public support, of Judge Foster, was of great value to him in that perilous beginning of his career. We of this generation have little conception of the difficulty in those times of making an orthodox faith and an active spiritual religion seem intellectually and socially respectable. One man of high culture and equal piety in a community was a tower of strength to a young preacher of the despised faith.

One word expresses in miniature his character as a *preacher*. He belonged to that class of

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preachers, who by temperament, as well as by theological conviction and providential opportunity, are *revivalists;* not itinerant evangelists, but *pastoral* leaders of spiritual reformations. Certain men in the ministry seem created by God for that service. The best of them are found in the pastoral office. They are not only profound believers in the reality of such works of divine grace, but they possess natural gifts and tastes which make them a power in popular awakenings. They are prophets in their discernment of the conditions in which such awakenings are practicable. They foresee them in their coming. They have electric affinities with the heart of live audiences. With such gifts is combined a certain power of "natural selection" in their choice of homiletic materials and methods. I call it "natural selection," because it is much more the working of the oratorical instinct, moved by the grace of God, than of any scholastic teaching, or of conscious deliberation. The result is a marvelous power of quickening, and of command over great assemblies.

They are not merely direct and pungent preachers, whose *aim* is to convert souls. Other men are all that who have not their success. Often, indeed usually, they are not men of accomplished scholarship; nor are their successes necessarily evidence of uncommon spiritual attainments. Men not eminent in these respects often possess the revival temperament, and its cognate gifts, in such

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large development as to give character to their whole ministry. Wherever they go, they are awakening powers in the pulpit. To the unconverted their voice is as the trump of judgment. Dead churches are quickened at their summons. Torpid communities groveling in worldliness are lifted into an upper atmosphere.

Religious inquirers find in these men a wonderful insight into spiritual conditions, and tact in meeting spiritual wants. Though not learned men, they have "the *tongue* of the learned." They speak the word in season. Common people hear them gladly. A certain power to *steady* in the very act of arousing, and so to hold well in hand, the emotions of packed audiences, enables them to achieve a wise economy of the moral forces, so as to promote great results in brief time and with the minimum of waste of sensibility. This is the *look* of their work to critical observers. For the most part, they are themselves unconscious of the profound and complicated art which they practice. Like other chosen builders of great things, they build better than they know.

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II.

A PASTOR OF THE LAST GENERATION.

PART II.

THE providence of God works with its chosen instruments. Men of the revival temperament described in the preceding pages, God commonly calls, by obvious opportunity, to leadership in great awakenings. For this cause came they into the world. Sometimes, like the elder Edwards, they are men of, in one sense, profound learning and eminent piety; but they are not necessarily such. Nor are their temperament and their providential work very friendly to either the tastes or the habits of eminent scholarship. The combination of all these elements in one man is very rare. When has a second Edwards appeared in our American churches? Indeed, was even his learning, in the sense of knowledge of libraries, any thing burdensome? The providence of God appears often very daring in its choice of imperfect instruments to do marvelous things.

Such preachers as the Rev. Dr. Davies of Virginia, the Rev. Gilbert Tennent of New Jersey, the Rev. Dr. Nettleton of Connecticut, the Rev.

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Lyman Beecher in Boston, the Rev. Dr. Taylor of New Haven, the Rev. Dr. Finney of Oberlin, the Rev. Dr. Blackburn of Missouri, and the Rev. Dr. Kirk of Boston, were representatives of this class of preachers. In the direct work of converting souls, and augmenting the numbers of the church, these men had no superiors. Such men do not execute as well, nor do they often estimate at its true value, the work of *educating* churches up to the more mature experience of a sanctified culture.

To this class of preachers the subject of this sketch belonged. Almost immediately after his ordination at West Brookfield, that venerable church began to quake as it had never done before since the Pequot war. His voice was that of one crying in the wilderness. Professors of religion under the "Halfway Covenant" were shaken out of their dreams. As usual, the awakening of men and women of blameless lives roused opposition. Some of the honored leaders of the church feared such an unwonted ado about religion. It was not comfortable. Things were not as they used to be. What was that but fanaticism? Evening meetings were objected to. Their fathers had not been guilty of evening meetings. Tallow candles — and the ancient church edifice contained no provision for any thing better — were not a churchly means of illumination in divine things. It was denounced as a disorder, if not a sin, to carry public worship into times and places which God had not consecrated to the

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purpose. Did not the Lord know how much time could be wisely given to public praying? The danger of nocturnal meetings to the youth of the two sexes was dreaded with pious horror. Unusual anxiety was felt for the overworked sexton. All things considered, what was the world coming to? The headstrong young preacher who was turning it upside down was threatened with a short pastorate.

On one occasion his spirit was stirred within him at seeing a crowd of the young men surrounding his own door at the hour he had appointed for a meeting of religious inquiry. Their hope was to intimidate the young women from attending it. As he approached, they fell back to the right and the left; and, as he walked up between, he cheerily invited them all to enter with him. "Whales in the sea God's voice obey." Laughing and jesting, the crowd followed him in. The dignity and beauty of the young wife awed them. Some of them were soon weeping; and before the winter was over the majority of them were converted.

His was one of the earliest Sunday schools established in this country. At the time, he knew of but one other. He organized his own on the very next day after he heard of one. Some of the best members of his church thought it a desecration of the sabbath. They refused to send their children. He might have been overcome in the controversy, had he not been supported by the

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wise counsel of Judge Foster. Said the judge to the opposers, "If you know your own interests, you will not drive this young man from you by refusing to let him work in his own way. Every captain must be master of his own ship. Give him time, and see what comes of it." Time showed that the Lord was with the young man.

On another occasion, a party of rude fellows sent to him a beautiful but notorious woman, who had been the ruin of some of them, persuading her to represent herself as an inquirer, anxious for her soul's salvation. They hoped to entangle him in some indiscretion. He detected the sham the instant she made known her errand. He turned, and invited his young wife to remain at the interview; and, after kneeling in prayer, he gave to the poor creature an admonition of such caustic fidelity, that she went back to the sons of Belial, and told them that she had been on a fool's errand, and that it would take longer heads than theirs to "catch the parson."

The revival advanced with increasing power, till the visible fruits of the "Halfway Covenant" were nearly eradicated from the church, and the whole town was pervaded by a new spirit. The work extended also into surrounding towns. He was sent for from far and near to labor in similar scenes. He was not partial to "evangelism" in the conduct of revivals in the older settlements of the country. His theory was, that mutual *pastoral* help was more effective, and less dangerous to the

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unity and good order of the churches. On this theory he acted. Braintree, Spencer, Somers, Warren, Sturbridge, Ware, Worcester, Northampton, Boston, and other places, witnessed the success of his preaching, especially in arousing the impenitent, and leading them to Christ. Thirty years afterwards I found traces of his work still remaining among the older members of the Park-street Church, in which he preached six weeks in the midst of a revival. Deacon Proctor, a well-known officer of that church, if I mistake not, met the decisive crisis of his religious life at that time.

The spirit of progressive enterprise led the country minister to organize a temperance society at West Brookfield, on the principle of total abstinence, when only one other member, even of the Brookfield Association of Ministers, supported the movement. He was the first clergyman of the county to remove the liquor-bottles from his sideboard. He bore calmly the charge that he did it from parsimonious motives. An aged clerical associate, who had more than once been seen to stagger up the pulpit-stairs on a Sunday afternoon, begged of his young brother not to be wiser than his fathers, nor more temperate than his blessed Master. For one, he wanted no better example than the Lord Jesus.

The mind of the young pastor was at that time on the alert to discover and to welcome any good cause. Foreign missions were a novelty to the American churches. Edward Everett satirized

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them in rhetoric unequaled. They found in my father a congenial spirit from the first. It was one of the entertainments of my childhood to teach the alphabet, when I knew little more myself, to the heathen youth whom he took into his family. The first missionary mechanic sent to the Hawaiian Islands was a member of his congregation. At the same time he was one of the most active friends of Amherst College, and one of the clerical donors to its treasury when its existence was imperiled. It was once my privilege to count the pile of silver-pieces on his table, which he had collected, in response to the appeal of Professor Stuart, for the library of Andover Seminary, — so varied and broadcast were the sympathies of the country parson.

The initiation which he received to the work of the pulpit by a powerful work of divine grace, wrought an effect on him which is often witnessed in the experience of pastors of the revival temperament. He fell into a snare. When years passed, and the revival was not repeated, he became restless and dissatisfied. They seemed to him years of waste. Theorize as he might about it, and his theory was correct enough, yet it was not in the nature of things that he should find in the slow education of the church the same bounding pulse of activity, and the same sense of achievement and of conquest, which exhilarated him when the tide of the religious awakening ran high. This is one of the re-actionary evils of re-

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vivals of which pastors need to take wise account. He, in his youthful and impatient zeal, did not. Like the rest of us, he read providences through the lens of temperament and prepossession, and at length persuaded himself that God called him elsewhere. He resigned his charge, and became the principal of the "Ladies' High School" at Pittsfield, Mass.

But scarcely was he inaugurated to his new office, when he discovered that he had committed, as he always afterwards called it, the great mistake of his life. He had left his heart, and the best capabilities of his nature, behind him, in the pulpit which he had abandoned. God had called him from the sheepfold to preach, not to teach. He reproached himself with ascetic severity for having allowed himself to be allured or driven from the true work of his life. But, at that humiliating juncture, his life illustrated signally the magnanimity with which God often overrules the mistakes of his chosen ones.

It happened that the pulpit of the First Church in Pittsfield was then vacant, by reason of the absence of its invalid pastor on a long furlough. My father was invited to be its pastor *pro tempore*. He engaged in the work with the humility of a penitent prodigal. The result, under God, was a revival of marvelous power, even for that favored town, which had but recently enjoyed the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Humphrey. In a few months, more than three hundred converts were admitted

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to the churches, the majority of them attributing their conversion to my father's labors. He was once more in his natural element. Night and day he labored for souls, and God gave him his heart's desire.

His longing to return permanently to pastoral office was deepened. As soon as his engagement with the trustees of the High School would permit his honorable retirement, he resigned the position, though his success in it had been undoubted, and it had begun to be pecuniarily profitable. He resumed his original purpose of seeking a pulpit in Western New York. In 1830 he succeeded the Rev. Henry Axtell, D.D., as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at Geneva, N.Y. On his way there, he preached with success in a revival in the city of Rochester.

At Geneva he remained six years. Again his ministry was attended with rich results in the conversion of the impenitent. At that period he was one of Dr. Finney's pastoral coadjutors. Though not friendly to the employment of evangelists in churches well provided with the agencies of churchly work, yet he recognized cordially providential exceptions. Of these he believed Dr. Finney to be one. This, it should be remembered, was long before Dr. Finney had gained that confidence of the churches which he enjoyed at Oberlin. My father, though he did not approve all his methods of procedure, yet was his stanch friend and supporter. His recognition of that remarka-

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ble man as one chosen of God to a great work, was an instance of rare foresight of coming history.

More than four hundred persons were added to the churches of Geneva who traced their conversion to my father's ministry. Among them were many cases of overwhelming conviction of sin. Conversions like those of Edwards and Brainerd were frequent. He used to be summoned at midnight to souls in despair. Some cases also occurred which looked fearfully like instances of the unpardonable sin. The narrative of one such he published, and it had a circulation of nearly a hundred and fifty thousand copies. The culmination of his life's usefulness probably occurred in that revival.

I well remember the debates in the parsonage between him and those of his clerical brethren who distrusted Dr. Finney. He had little to say of clerical theories, for or against. He used to appeal to the facts known and read of all men. There were the dead churches before Dr. Finney's advent, and there were the same churches teeming with life afterwards. What more need be said? For many years he kept himself informed as to the permanence of Dr. Finney's work. The statistics he collected from the churches of Western New York confirmed his judgment of those revivals, that they were the genuine work of God. It was no small part of an education for the ministry to listen to those clerical discussions about the great evangelist. One of my father's axioms,

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I remember, impressed me deeply: "Better do some things wrong than do nothing." Few things illustrate the adventurous spirit of his life better than that proverb. It covers, also, a very large portion of the debatable ground between the friends of revivals and those good men who are more keenly sensible of the perils of them than of their benefits.

Rochester, Lockport, Lyons, Penn Yan, Canandaigua, Ovid, Buffalo, Auburn, Utica, were among the localities in which he preached with marked success. In those years he rarely, if ever, preached sermons which were not apparently the means of immediate and visible usefulness. To my boyish judgment he seemed to live in one continuous revival. Such was the atmosphere of the parsonage. Such was the spirit of all his preaching. His days were spent, when not in his study, in the work of conversation with men upon the realities of eternity.

I remember once riding with him six miles into the country in search of a man, not one of his congregation, but who professed to be an infidel, and whom my father claimed on the principle which he often affirmed as the rule of his pastoral labors, — "The man who belongs nowhere belongs to me, and I must give account of him." On the occasion referred to he spent the whole afternoon in argument and friendly admonition to the unbeliever. I could not judge of his success: I only knew that he seemed to have made the man his

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friend. One of the wealthiest men in his parish was believed to be unapproachable on the subject of religion. The pastor, not daunted by the report, called upon him, followed him into his magnificent garden, and, after discussing the fruits of the season till his host seemed to be in good humor, sat down with him on a bench in the arbor, and told him his errand. The old man drew himself up, and said, in hackneyed pride, "Sir, my religion lies between me and my God. When I feel the need of other aid, I will send for you." The pastor grasped his hand, and replied, "My friend, you and I may both be in eternity long before that time. I can not afford to wait, if you can." In three minutes the sinner of sixty years was weeping like a child. He confessed that for weeks he had been contending with the spirit of God.

In this matter of personal fidelity to the souls of men, I must regard him as a model pastor. He had little confidence in the usefulness of a pastor whom his people saw only or chiefly in the pulpit. Volumes would be required to relate the narrative of his pastoral faithfulness and its reward. The staple theme of conversation in his home was the salvation of men. I well remember the novelty of the discovery to me when I left home, and learned that there were clerical families in which this was not true. The home-life of my father for years led me to interpret literally the apostolic injunctions respecting "holy conversation." He

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read little in those years of revival: he had no time for it, outside of the work of his pulpit. Yet I remember heavy additions to his library made at that time. His first purchase of a copy of Shakspeare occurred then. But his life's work was that of preaching Christ publicly, and from house to house. The "Apostle to the Gentiles" could scarcely have given himself more devotedly to that one thing.

Still his life did not make on an observer the impression of professional routine. It had the look of the natural adjustment to the conditions of his calling. It was not the contraction of a narrow mind: it was the intensity of a concentrated mind. Whatever may be true of other professions, that of a Christian pastor, whose work God may at any time cover with foreshadowings of the day of judgment, by a mysterious awakening of the popular conscience, *must* command these two elements of executive force, — mental intensity and mental unity. A cooler temperament, or a more complex and reticulated life, can not meet the demands of the situation. The successes which great awakenings indicate are never achieved by such a life.

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III.

A PASTOR OF THE LAST GENERATION.

PART III.

THE results of my father's labors were much beyond those which are commonly appreciable and tangible in the experience of pastors. It is the life-long trial of some good men, that their life's work is so absorbed in general currents of influence, that they can not lay their hand upon this thing or that, and say, "This is my reward." His work was not thus buried from his own sight. He modestly estimated the number of those who attributed their conversion directly to his words as about one thousand. Those who knew better than he did the fruits of his work outside of his own churches doubled that number.

In one respect his work strikingly resembled that of Dr. Finney, though it was not nearly so extensive. Multitudes of *church-members* who had lived under fatalistic conceptions of divine grace believed themselves to have been enlightened, and first really converted, by the blessing of God upon his preaching. The cases were constantly occurring of men and women who were

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relieved from life-long bondage or from skepticism by his methods of presenting the Calvinistic type of theology. Persons from distant places used to seek his counsel, under awakenings of conscience produced by casually hearing a sermon from his lips. Methodists and Quakers came to him with their denominational objections to high Calvinism, and left him, saying, that, "if he was not right in his theology, he was a most dangerous man; for he had a marvelous power to make the wrong seem right." Cases of conscience were brought to him in large numbers for adjudication. Many infidels, also, were first silenced, and then apparently converted, by their first hearing of the gospel, in the New-England methods of interpretation, in his pulpit or at the parsonage. Thus presented, it seemed to them for the first time a credible system of truth.

The waves of spiritual awakening which during those years rolled over the interior and western counties of New York, were interpreted by him as being *philosophically* the natural re-action from a fatalistic type of Calvinism to one more consistent with the Scriptures and with the necessary beliefs of men. The biography of Dr. Finney gives ample evidence of the correctness of this view. Gross distortions of the Calvinistic theology had got possession of the popular faith throughout large sections of the central and western counties. Errors they were, which nobody — Old School, or New, or neither — ever preached.

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They illustrated the principle which justifies even a fastidious care for soundness in the faith, — that the popular theology is sure to reduce to caricature the plausible error of him who teaches it. That which in him is only a moderate foreshortening of perspective becomes in it a grotesque monstrosity. He puts together golden treasures in the effort to create a god, and there comes out a calf. Human nature everywhere has a Pagan propensity to fétichism. It had full swing in the popular forms of Calvinism in Western New York, previous to the great awakening under Dr. Finney.

It would be a libel upon any school of divinity to hold it responsible for those enormous freaks of fatalism which Dr. Finney and his coadjutors had to encounter. Buried beneath that mass of rubbish, there lay a vast amount of pure truth in the popular convictions. It had been planted there by earnest and godly men of the Old School. The elements of a religious revival were all there: they needed only the men endued with the revival temperament, and possessed of a scriptural and rational theology, and blessed of God as he is wont to bless such men when called to his work, to set the whole heavens in a glow with the reflection of light from enkindled altars. It was my father's privilege to be one of the chosen instruments in that work. Evangelists achieved a wider reputation than his; but few pastors of his generation, or of ours, have been so signally rewarded.

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It was in those days a question vital to the character of a minister, How does he stand affected towards the institution of slavery? My father, by natural temperament, was not a conservative, and he was not a radical. On almost all subjects he saw two sides of things. But, if the course of events compelled him to appear to side with either extreme, he was apt to drift towards the side of the radical. He refused his pulpit to an abolitionist lecturer of the long haired and bearded school, because, he said, his people had rights there which he was bound to respect; but, if a fugitive slave applied to him for food and a hiding-place, he fell back on first principles, and bade his fellow-man welcome to both. He would not go out of his way as a Christian minister to hunt up an "underground railroad." He said that God had not ordained him to that business. But, if the "underground railroad" passed by his door, he used it without clerical or political scruple. Several fugitives owed their liberty to his aid. He would not take the platform with Mr. Garrison, because he revered the Scriptures and the church of Christ more than he did anybody's civil freedom. But, whenever he encountered antislavery free from infidel adjuncts, he gave it the hand of fellowship with all his heart. He never advised black men to go to Liberia. The Colonization Society was to his view organized folly: he used to say, that, as a political scheme, it was a fraud, and, as a missionary scheme, a farce. With the

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exception of this distrust of African colonization, he represented fairly the general antislavery policy of the Northern clergy of his day. It is a libel upon them to portray them otherwise.

He once employed for several months a runaway negro as a laborer. One morning the rumor came that John's master was at the hotel, within a pistol-shot of the parsonage, that he had obtained a warrant for the arrest of his chattel, and that he had a leash of dogs on hand for the hunt. Geneva attracted slave-hunters at that time; because, besides being near the border-line of Canada, it was the seat of a negro colony of some three hundred, nearly all the adults being runaways. I suppose it would have cost the pastor his pulpit, if the deed of that day had been known. The United-States marshal of the district was one of his parishioners. It is sufficient token of the dominant politics of that period, that it was on the eve of the election of Martin Van Buren, a favorite son of New York, to the presidency. Among the pastor's flock were magnates to whom the "Union and the Constitution" were second only to the oracles of God.

But the shield was turned now in his vision; and John appeared to have rights, which, pulpit or no pulpit, must not be ignored by a minister of Christ. He resolved that John should have fair play. He asked him if he wanted to go back to Maryland. John thought not. But had he not left a wife in Maryland? Yes; but he had

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"anoder one" in Geneva. She was "black but comely," and had borne him two children. His Maryland master had not taught him very clear notions of the marriage-tie. On the whole, he thought "he'd sooner die than leave the pickaninnies." "If he went back, his master would sell him South." "He'd rather go to hell." "He reckoned he wouldn't be took alive." "He'd take his chance with the hounds."

As the market stood in those days, he was worth taking alive, if the hounds could be kept off from the jugular vein. He was a stout "six-footer," in the prime of manhood; a bright mulatto, with white brains, sound in wind and limb; his teeth would bear counting on the auction-block, and he was a trained mechanic withal: in return for some teaching which I gave him, he had taught me how to shingle a barn. The master's title, too, was beyond a doubt: his broad back was branded very legibly. My father told him he hoped nobody would have to die; but he added some advice, in tones too low for me to hear, but with a compression of the mouth which was well understood in the discipline of the family. He then told John to take to a certain piece of woods, and wait there, while he himself went to the hotel to reconnoiter.

John crept around the barn of the hotel to a little cabin, where "the pickaninnies" were rolling in the dirt, and was soon ranging the woods. A few hours after, the pastor returned, with lips more sternly compressed than ever, and proceeded to

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make up a basket of food for John. He brought it to me, and told me to go with it, and find him. My father's eye silently answered mine when I observed that the knife was not the mate of the fork, that it was too large to be covered in the basket, that, in short, it was the largest carver in the house, — the one with which John had not long before slaughtered a pig. It was as nearly a facsimile of a bowie-knife as the credit of the parsonage ought to bear. I found John. His eye, too, alighted first on the familiar knife. The grim smile of his savage ancestors gleamed around his white teeth. He played with the food, but treasured the knife in his bosom. Said he, as I took his hand at parting, "Tell your fader that he is a Christian and a gemman, ebery inch of him." His ideas of what Christianity *is* may have been rather mixed (he had learned them at the whipping-post); but his half-savage intuitions of what Christianity ought to *do* for a hunted man were not far wrong. So, at least, the pastor thought. It was well for dog and master that they did not find John's trail. Indeed, I suspect the dogs were left at the hotel. Even Martin Van Buren's constituents in a livery-stable would hardly have winked at that business on the soil of New York. Human nature has an innate reverence for the jugular vein.

My father's prayer with us that night was unusually solemn. He remembered *both* the slave and the slave-hunter. In no other event of his

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life known to me did the old blood of England's Ironsides leap to view so vividly as in that deed and that prayer of loyalty to human liberty. Yes, *his* Christianity was of that sort. Yet nineteen-twentieths of the Northern clergy of his generation would have done the same, although some of those very men — not a great many of them — afterwards preached in defense of the fugitive slave-law. It is one thing to sermonize in one's study by candle-light, and with feet incased in warm slippers: it is quite another thing to set dogs on the trail of a panting man in the woods in broad day. Blessed be the inconsistencies of good men! Ah, how far back in the middle ages those days seem now! Were beasts ever brought from Maryland to hunt men on the banks of silvery Lake Seneca, within sight of the tower of Hobart College? Did living man ever think to set blood-hounds on the track of a woman, where their baying would be answered by vesper-bells from the belfry of a Christian church?

My father's pastoral preaching was terminated suddenly. An attack of the Asiatic cholera, the infection of which he caught in the course of his pastoral duty, brought him to death's door. He was given up by his physicians, and was supposed to be in the stage of speechless collapse, when he suddenly spoke, and prescribed for himself the means of cure. He believed ever afterwards that he was divinely guided in the extremity to the saving of his life. To the physician it was only

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one of the mysterious instances in which nature springs upon disease from ambuscade, and conquers.

But the caustic remedies which had been before employed shattered his nervous system, so that he never again felt able to resume the labors of a settled pastor. He resigned his charge at Geneva, and in 1836 removed to Philadelphia, to take the secretaryship of the American Education Society there, and afterwards at New York also. He labored in the usual routine of those offices till advancing years obliged him to retire from all continuous public service.

As my main object is to portray his pastoral life, in which, in my judgment, his chief usefulness was achieved, I will not here detail his work as a counselor, and one of the executives, always in the interest of union, in the controversy which sundered the Presbyterian Church. Suffice it to say, that he was the supporter and personal friend and parishioner of the Rev. Albert Barnes; if I remember rightly, was a member of the General Assembly which acquitted Mr. Barnes of the charge of heresy; was for two years the anonymous editor of "The Christian Observer," the organ of the New School men of Philadelphia; and was one of the New School Assembly which formed itself, when, after the exscinding acts of 1837, Mr. Barnes, Dr. Beman, Dr. Cox, Dr. Beecher, and others, were, like himself, refused seats in the Assembly of 1838.

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He did not enjoy that controversial work. His heart was elsewhere. He entered the Presbyterian Church in that spirit of fraternal comity which then united it, in sympathy with the Congregational churches of New England, under the "Plan of Union," and the loss of which has been of no benefit to either. He labored for Presbyterian interests in good faith, as long as his official connections bound him in honor to them; but he was always at heart a Congregationalist. His experience in the Presbyterian "camp," as he used to call it, intensified his attachment to the polity of his fathers. It was his favorite theory, that the male adult members of a Presbyterian church ought all of them to be elected to the eldership. His Scotch brethren in the presbytery never took the joke.

It was after his retirement from public life that he became interested in Spiritualism. It would be more truthful to say that *it* became interested in *him;* for it came upon him without his seeking, suddenly invading his household, and making a pandemonium of it for seven months, and then departing as suddenly as it came. The phenomena resembled those which for many years afflicted the Wesley family, and those which at one time attended the person of Oberlin. They were an almost literal repetition of some of the records left by Cotton Mather. Had my father lived in 1650 instead of 1850, he and his family would have lived in history with the victims on Tower

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Hill in Salem. That the facts were real, a thousand witnesses testified. An eminent judge in the State of New York said that he had pronounced sentence of death on many a criminal on a tithe of the evidence which supported those facts. That they were inexplicable by any known principles of science was equally clear to all who saw and heard them, who were qualified to judge. Experts in science went to Stratford in triumphant expectation, and came away in dogged silence, convinced of nothing, yet solving nothing. If modern science had nothing to show more worthy of respect than its solutions of Spiritualism, alchemy would be its equal, and astrology infinitely its superior. It will never do to consign a delusion so seductive to the ignorant, and so welcome to the skeptic, to the limbo of "an if," and leave it there.

To my father the whole thing was a visitation from God. He bowed to the affliction in sorrow and in prayer. He never gave credence to it as a revelation of religious truth for an hour. The only point in which it affected his interpretation of the Scriptures was that of the biblical demonology. When science failed to give him an explanation which deserved respect, he fell back upon the historic faith of the Christian Church in the personality and activity of angels, good and evil. He held the scriptural demonology as a tentative explanation of Spiritualism until science could furnish something better. But long before

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his decease he had lost his interest in it; and during the last two years of his life it had probably faded from his memory. When thanksgiving for the "precious blood of Christ" was often heard from his chamber, he was sometimes prompt to deny that the mysteries of Stratford had ever existed, so little impression had they left upon him as the origin of any thing in his religious faith.

The closing years of his life were years of hallowed peace. With the exception of a treacherous memory, he retained his mental faculties till the last half-year. His forecast of the world's future was youthful in its hopefulness. It had always been so. Great and good things he had witnessed in his day, but greater and better were looming in the eastern horizon. Young ministers it was his wont to congratulate on their privilege of living in the coming age. I never but once heard from him a word which indicated that he would not gladly live his life over again. To spend a half-hour with him was itself a benediction. His youthful pastor at Weehawken "counted it as the chief blessing of his ministry that it gave him the privilege of communion with the old prophet on the eve of his translation."

Of the final scene of still and painless ascension, what shall I say? — "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof."

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IV.

THE RIGHTS OF BELIEVERS IN ANCIENT CREEDS.

PART I.

THE integrity of assent to venerable creeds is sometimes questioned, and scruples respecting it are sometimes felt through the ignoring of certain vital principles.

1. The professed believer in such a creed *is entitled to a recognition of the inevitable changes which time brings about in the meaning of language.* Words are not eternal. No precision of science can make them so. The history of lexicography shows that words may slide down the scale of departure from their original sense till they reach its flat contradiction.

Dr. Barrow says that "men ought to cherish a fit *resentment* towards God." The word "resentment" once signified the return of grateful affection for favor received. It signifies just the opposite now.

In some theological systems, and not very distant either, the words "guilt" and "punishment" had meanings which no popular usage now affixes to them, if popular use ever did accept them.

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"Guilt" meant exposure to the consequences of sin; "punishment," the suffering of those consequences. In such dialect, innocence might be "guilty," saints might suffer "punishment," our blessed Lord might bear the punishment of a world's transgressions. Men have, therefore, been pronounced guilty of Adam's sin, and threatened with punishment for that sin, by divines who never meant to teach that which would now be understood by such language. They meant only that men are exposed to, and do suffer, the consequences of Adam's sin. They no more meant that men are ill deserving for the sin of Adam than that the son of a thief deserves the penitentiary for the father's crime.

We are horrified when a venerable father of the Church declares that Christ was guilty of the sins of the elect, and that he suffered punishment in their stead. But many who have used such phraseology never understood by it what it seems to say to modern ears. A modern believer of such a creed, then, is not to be censured, if he interprets it, not by the modern lexicon, but by the ancient and technical theological usage.

2. He has also the right *to interpret a creed, in part, by the history of its formation.* All the great confessions of the Church are historic monuments: so are some of the creeds of our ancient local churches. They are landmarks of Christian opinion. They grew up in crises: they grew out of periods of agitation. New dangers threatened the

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faith of the Church, or new inspiration enlightened and expanded it; and hence a new creed was born to express the new intellectual and spiritual life. Internal conflicts of opinion, or conflicts with infidelity outside, have usually been the immediate cause of the creation of standards of Christian faith.

That precedent and contemporaneous history could not fail to color the significance of the confession of faith to which it gave birth. Like cause, like effect. Local exigencies, national crises, the convulsions of an age, gave peculiar senses to terms; they emphasized favorite phrases; they loaded old words with new forces; they often wrenched words out of popular into technical usage. Some words they shelved in the archives of scholastic thought, and left them there to die. Not one of the standard creeds of the Church is a perfectly fair, calm, equipoised compendium of revealed truth, unbiased by the temper of the times, by the infirmities of blinded science, and specially by the crudities of philosophical schools. Not one of them has the serene beauty of inspired proportions. They are all standards of the militant church. They are symbols of opinion boiling in the crucible of conflicting and often intemperate thought. They have, therefore, a belligerent outlook, — one this way, another that. They exalt some truths unduly, and depress others. Like the valleys and mountains of the globe, they are the product of volcanic cataclysms. Some of them

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contain gorges like those of Gondo and the Via Mala. Spots there are in them on which the sun never shone.

The history of such a creed is essential to its interpretation. The modern believer has the right to go back, and unearth that buried record. He must do so in order to know what the authors of that creed really meant. Its language he has the right often to interpret by what they meant, rather than by what to modern ears they seem to have said. He is not to be held to account, but applauded rather, if he lets in the light of other days upon the obscure inscription. In adopting it as his own, he may honestly give to it a meaning somewhat other than that seen by the cursory reader of to-day.

In the creed of the Andover Seminary it is declared that man has "corporeal strength to do all that God requires of him." To one not well read in the theological controversies of New England, this seems very odd, if not absurd, phraseology. What can it mean? Have grave and learned men met in conclave to bind the instructors of the clergy through all time to teach that men have power of blood and bones and sinews and muscles to do God's bidding? Wise men have debated the power of angels to dance on the point of a needle, and have essayed to count them in their sport. But when did ever theological wisdom muddle itself with such a crotchet of "human ability" as this?

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But a little fragment of history solves the riddle. Among the founders of the Andover Seminary, two schools of theology were represented. Two seminaries were, in fact, in embryo, before the friends of either knew of the conception of the other. It was of great moment that the strength of the New-England churches, then depleted severely by the Unitarian departure, should not be wasted in the support of antagonist schools of divinity. The founders of the one held stoutly to what was then called the "natural ability" of man to do all that God required of him. The founders of the other as stoutly denied this. The very phrase had become odious to them. It expressed a pestilent heresy. The Presbyterian Church, thirty years later, was exploded into halves by it.

How to bring the two embryo schools into one was the problem. For a long time it was a vexed one. Mr. Phillips's farms at Andover, and Mr. Norris's keg of silver dollars over which he prayed for the divine acceptance, were waiting for their reverend pastors and teachers to agree upon a creed which should bear the test of all coming time. It would not do for Dr. Spring and his associates to insist on the technical yet most obvious language of the New School, by saying that men have "natural ability." Dr. Morse and his friends of the Old School would have flung themselves off in a tangent from such a heresy. Over one of the points of controversy between them.

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said one of the leaders, "We will see the seminary sunk in the sea, before we will set our hands to such a dogma." Therefore the creed of the united body, in which all came together harmless as doves, if not wise as serpents, was made to read that man has "corporeal strength to do all that God requires."

A poor substitute this for "natural ability," as read by the rhetoric of to-day; but any thing was better than eternal war over two words. Thus Massachusetts escaped the subsequent theological history of Connecticut. In the light of such an episode of history the modern subscriber to the creed has a right mentally to restore, if he pleases, the more accurate phrase, "natural ability," in place of the crude substitute. "Natural ability" was what they all meant, if they had but known it. It is right for their modern successors to say so.

3. The foregoing piece of history suggests also that the signer of an ancient creed *has a right to recognize and reason from well-known compromises contained in the creed.* All the great symbols of the Church's faith are compromises. From the nature of the case they must be such. They must have been such in the intent of their originators. No political platform of a great party is possible in other shape than that of compromise. The same is true of the Confession of any great section of the Church. In no other way can the accordant faith of a multitude of earnest and wide-

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awake minds be expressed in language. In every such body of thinkers the Left yields something to the Right, and the Right yields something to the Left, and the Centre gives way somewhat to both. Probably no creed was ever formed, or can be, to be the standard of a large body of believers, which any one of its original framers could accept as the exact and sufficient symbol of his own belief, without abatement and without supplement. Every man of them had his own gloss to put upon that or this: all had an appendix of memoranda and errata in their own minds.

The Westminster Catechism was such a compromise; so was the Augsburg Confession; so, too, the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and the Confession of Dort. To an ear wonted to the clang of theological debate, the silver ring of compromise is audible in them all.

This fact of historic compromise is often a very pregnant one to a modern believer in defining the sense of the words he accepts. He is entitled to the full benefit of it: nay, he is bound in honor not to ignore it. He has the right to say that a certain extreme of theological dogma which some may find in the creed, and would force upon him, is not there, because it is contradictory to the spirit of the compromise in which the creed was framed.

We have been told, for instance, that the New-England theology can not be honestly held in the terms of the Westminster Catechism, and there-

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fore that the New-England theologian can not honorably subscribe that Confession. We deny it, partly on the ground of what the Catechism expressly affirms, but partly, also, on the ground of the compromise which historically it represents. There were men in the Westminster Assembly who held the essential points of the New-School theology of our day; not in modern phrase indeed: they did not hold any thing in modern phrase. But in language of their own, equally significant, they held to the freedom of the human will and its inevitable corollaries. They never would have given their names to a creed designed, *as they understood it*, to deny that necessary belief of the human mind.

Under cover of their wing, all other New-School believers to the end of time may honestly subscribe that Confession as teaching, and *meant* to teach, the essentials of their own theology. Whatever some phrases of the Catechism, without historic note or comment, may seem to say, the document as a whole *can not* have been designed to teach a fatalistic type of Calvinism, because of the historic fact of compromise between those who held that type and those who denied it. Men were there, and they signed their names to the work of the Assembly, who never would have done so, if, in their own judgment or that of their associates, that act held them to the dogma of unmitigated fatalism.

Even the Confession of Dort, adopted by per-

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haps the most rigidly Calvinistic body of divines ever convened in equal numbers, can not properly be so interpreted that a New-School theologian may not honestly accept it with *his* interpretation; for the spirit of compromise was there also. Marks of it are visible in certain paragraphs which could have no other purpose.

Said one of the leaders of that famous conclave, in the course of their discussions, quoting, probably, from a similar utterance in the Council of Trent, "I believe in both the decrees of God and the responsibility of man, because *I believe in certainty with power to the contrary.*" There was the central principle of the New-England theology. The Rev. Dr. Taylor of New Haven, and the Rev. Albert Barnes of Philadelphia, its latest representatives, and the defenders of it in its final fruitage, never got beyond that principle. No man who held it could have set his hand to a creed which was, as those of Dort and Westminster are often claimed to be, fatalistic through and through.

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V.

THE RIGHTS OF BELIEVERS IN ANCIENT CREEDS.

PART II.

4. THE compromises of ecclesiastical standards, to which allusion has been made, suggest a fourth principle, which should in equity regulate the modern indorsement of them. It is, that the believer *has a right to his own method of reconciling the contradictions of a creed.*

Where is the historic creed, which, strictly interpreted, does not involve self-contradictions? So many and so profound are the opposites in truth, that human speech can scarcely utter them vigorously, except in forms of statement which crowd opposites into contraries. Of course they are not contraries, but vivid statement makes them appear such. The best conceptions of them by earnest thinkers seem irreconcilable. The thinking of an age which forces a great creed into being will express its standard formulæ in no wary or diplomatic shape. These come forth rather in weighted if not impassioned language. They leap, full-grown, into stalwart frame, like the mail-clad warriors of the age in which they

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are born. They seem as if heralded by challenge to battle to all comers.

These opposites, of which all deepest truth is full, the authors of the great Confessions have commonly chosen to express, as the Duke of Wellington said all contradictions should be "reconciled," — "Never explain contradictions, but assert both extremes vehemently." So the contradictions of historic creeds are not loaded with philosophic adjustments in nice and trembling balance, but with unqualified assertions rather of both belligerents. There is more of sound philosophy than appears at the first blush in this apparent ignoring of philosophy. Such truths as election and ability, decrees and prayer, regeneration and repentance, the deity of our Lord and his humanity, the peril of apostasy and the perseverance of the saints, can not well be so formulated as either to awaken an earnest faith, or to express it, except in language, which, to say the least, borders hard upon downright contrariety. The deepest thinking must evolve them in such militant shape, or fail to reach by them the deepest feeling. "Deep calleth unto deep." The collision is but the mingling of mighty waters.

The existence of such seeming contradictions in the standard Confessions of Christendom must be conceded. Then, to each believer must be granted the independent right to his own way of reconciling them. Each must be allowed to have his own philosophy. It is his right to dovetail

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things by his own mechanism. Wide asunder as the poles the philosophies may be: that matters not. Sufficient is it, if the resulting faith, as a whole, is held fast, and honest hands clasp each other. My philosophy may be the mumbling of idiocy to you, and yours may be the raving of mania to me; yet we may both be honest men, true believers, and as clear-headed as the average of men in accepting the same form of sound words. Your perspective of truth may bring to the foreground a doctrine which mine would thrust to the rear; yours may lay bare to the tropic sunlight a truth which mine would veil in a lunar twilight; yours may exalt God, and mine may arouse man; you may preach sovereignty, and I may preach duty; you may bow reverently before our Lord's divinity, and I may cling tremblingly to his humanity. What matters it? Each must say, "This is my infirmity." Let us be glad, if, even inconsistently, we join hands after all.

Our grandest creeds — those which have done best service to the Church, and have gathered to themselves the wealth of the ages in the reverent affection of believers — are meant to embrace such diversities of temperament, and of mental idiosyncrasy, and of national tastes, and of the bias of race, yet to bind them all in the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. So must we be content to receive them. It is my right to interpret your favorite dogma by the balancing opposite in mine. We must not peck at each other's

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eyeballs, because each prefers to look out from his favorite eyry. We both see through a glass darkly. We must not pry too curiously into each other's methods of deliverance from self-contradiction. We are neither of us hypocrites for not petting each other's philosophies.

5. The believer of an ancient Confession is *entitled also, within certain limits, to a help, which, for the want of a better definition, I will call, The logic of the drift of a creed.* Great symbols of the life of the Church mean often more than they say. They are symbols not only of a fixed faith, never of a perfectly finished faith, but of a blind reaching after unknown discovery. They are landmarks of a line of march, of which the final fortress is not yet reached.

John Robinson's imperial message, "God has more truth yet to break forth from his Holy Word," is hinted at in a certain leaning-forward of our best Confessions into the thought of subsequent ages. They read like prophecies. We interpret them by their fulfillment in the work of later thinkers. Their reverent authors seem as if hearkening for the voice of new revelations. They evidently believed more than they have recorded for our instruction. They were men of progress. They had unspoken visions. Had they lived to our times, they would have seen more truth, and proclaimed it authoritatively. They would have proportioned and balanced and shaded Christian doctrines

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more architecturally. They would have heard more distinctly the music of the spheres. We can not help seeing, in what they did declare, the signs of what they would have taught, and where their convictions would have ranked them among the theologians of to-day. The *drift* of their teachings necessitates the admission of more truth, like the discovery of Neptune through Leverrier's foresight.

This logic of the drift of a great system of theology it is the right of a modern believer to recognize, and, *within certain limits*, to use as a help to its intepretation. He is at liberty to read between the lines. He may, for instance, qualify extremes by the hints of their unspoken opposites. In short, he may interpret the system as a whole by its obvious and indubitable though bungling sympathy with the discoveries of later times.

"Within certain limits," I repeat. True, this is a perilous principle. It can be easily abused. So may all the vital principles which govern speech. But it is a true principle, and valuable, nevertheless. In the thinking of a reverent and ingenuous mind it may serve to relieve a creed from downright absurdities.

This principle is of special value in the interpretation of those portions of the creeds which concern the freedom of the human will, and its theological corollaries.[1] On this subject, truth

[1] One or two paragraphs in this connection have appeared in another volume by the author.

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has been of slow and toilsome growth. She has crept and limped up the great highway of human opinion. With a great sum obtained we this freedom. Pagan theology everywhere was and is saturated to the point of stupor with fatalism. The early Christian thought was drugged with the same poison. The *clear* enunciation of the liberty of the human will, and the consistent teaching of the consequent truth of man's ability, has been, in the main, the product of the Christian thinking of the last two hundred years. We owe it largely to the political and civil history of the Netherlands.

Some of the historic creeds of Christendom, therefore, are wofully disproportioned on this class of doctrines. They qualify to death what they have affirmed, and raise from the dead what they have disowned. They emphasize the sovereignty of God, and blur the responsibility of man. They thunder the doctrine of decrees, and whisper or stammer the truth of man's ability. In all that renders God august and terrible, their sound is the blast of a trumpet. In all that should quicken man's consciousness of moral dignity and duty, their voice is but the reverberation of a distant and doubtful echo. Sometimes man's ability to do his duty is taught by inference only. Yet in them all are to be found hints of it and of its kindred doctrines. Implications of them abound. Leanings-forward and outstretched hands are visible towards the more absolute forms of them in our modern theology.

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It is right, therefore, to read such creeds in the light of their obvious drift in this respect. Premonitions of later discoveries in theologic science are as much a part of the creeds as their plain record of the earlier theologic beliefs. We must admit and trust those premonitions. In no other way can we come at the whole mind of the venerable authors of our standards. Not otherwise, it may be, can we save a revered symbol of our faith from absolute hostility to modern beliefs, and a revolt of the sympathies of our own times. Not otherwise can we preserve to our theologic formulæ the support of historic prestige, for the want of which we labor at such disadvantage in the controversy with the Church of Rome. As the world grows older, the prestige of age becomes more and more valuable in the standards which claim its religious faith. Other things being equal, those will sway the future who bring to its conquest the heaviest forces and swiftest momentum of the past.

6. The believer in an ancient Confession of Faith *has the right to subscribe it as a whole, without being held to indorsement of its every detail.* Literalists may sneer as they will at the phrase "for substance of doctrine;" but the use of it is a sheer necessity to the adoption of any creed in any age by any multitude of thinking men.

Still more necessary is it in the profession of a creed inherited from ancestral standards. Water, even iron, may be made to run in grooves: not so

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thought. In the great essentials of a great faith, independent minds in innumerable hosts may accord for ever; but in the minutiæ of incident and of diction, and specially of shading and proportion, never, even in dozens and for an hour. They never have done it. They never will. The Architect of mind has not so made mind. Only in profoundest ignorance and brutish vacuity of thought can literal uniformity of faith exist. Only under the hoof of ecclesiastical tyranny will the enforcement of it be attempted.

The examiners of a candidate for one of the chairs in the Andover Seminary once sounded him upon his reading of the Westminster Confession. He assented to it "for substance of doctrine." One of the reverend fathers demurred. Another, the late Rev. Dr. Humphrey of Amherst College, whom none will accuse of theological vagaries, replied, "No mortal man with a mind of his own ever accepted the Westminster Catechism without qualifications of his own." He was right. The same is true of any Confession, unless it be some brief compendium of historic *fact* rather than of *doctrine*, like the Apostles' Creed. He must not, then, be held to account as a trickster who signs reverently our elaborate and ancient standards "for substance of doctrine." Nor should the conscience of any believer be goaded by condemning scruples for doing the same thing in accepting the creed of the local church. It is his right. In doing it he is only doing that which its very

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authors did when it expressed their freshest thought. Such qualification of assent is a necessity to all *consensus* of many minds to an instrument constructed by a distant generation, and elaborated by the ablest thinking of its age.

7. The foregoing principles need to be qualified by one other, to prevent abuse. It is, that the subscriber to one of the ancient creeds has no right *to mutilate by his interpretation the great structural elements of that creed which make it what it is*, and which, in one form or another, all the great historic Confessions affirm. I refer here to those Confessions only which may fairly be taken as expressing the *matured* and *complete* faith of the Church, dating from the Athanasian Creed downward; not those which represent its infantile attempts at systematic belief, nor those constructed chiefly to counteract partial errors.

These historic creeds, expressing the present faith of Christendom, are attempts to do what the Scriptures do not profess to do, — to reduce the Christian faith to system. Infirmly yet intelligibly they have done this. They all contain a certain rounded structure, in which certain doctrines fit in to each other, and are emphasized as essentials. Respecting those central and essential truths, the authors of the great Confessions never meant to compromise. They felt no need of compromise. So far, they saw eye to eye. The evolution of belief through ages of discussion has tended not to obscure or to qualify those grand

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essentials, but to define and enforce them as *the* faith delivered to the saints.

We commonly designate these truths as "The Doctrines of Grace." The being and sovereignty of God, the inspiration of the Bible, the depravity of man, the necessity of regeneration, the trinity of the Godhead, the atonement of Christ, the eternity of future rewards and punishments, — these are the essentials of the system. They fall naturally into accord with each other. They intensify and buttress each other. They are not matters of philosophy, much as we may philosophize *about* them. They are revealed facts. If one of them is compromised or denied, they all sooner or later suffer. It is a vital point in the argument for any one of them, that it is *needed* for the self-consistency and the intensity of the system as a whole. Abstract any one of them, and all the rest collapse somewhat from the fullness of their meaning. The main object, therefore, of systematic creeds, has been to protect them one and all, and one as much as another.

A believer in one of these matured and standard denominational creeds of the Church, therefore, has no right so to use the liberty of individual interpretation as to throw out, or to obscure, any one of these structural elements. He has no right to claim that he accepts the creed "for substance of doctrine," if he rejects any one of them. He has no authority to say that one of them is not essential to the system of truth which the creeds

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are meant to define. The overwhelming *consensus* of the Church has declared that every one of them *is* essential. The assemblies which framed the creeds in expression of that faith have pronounced them essential.

If, then, I have a later revelation which assures me otherwise, so be it. The Church has no right to molest me in my right to believe or to deny. To God I stand or fall, not to man. But the Church *has* the right to say that I shall not shelter my denial under cover of her creeds, and claim therefor her fellowship and indorsement. The *consensus* of the Church Universal to the few central facts of the system of grace lifts them out of the range of individual liberty in interpreting the creeds which contain them. I have no right to use my liberty of interpretation to their destruction. There they stand, stamped with the impress of ages of Christian belief. There they must stand for ever to all who would *use those creeds* as the expression of their faith, and their passport as religious teachers to the confidence of mankind.

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VI.

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION.

It is needful, at times, to take our theologic bearings anew, that we may know whither we are advancing. Such a necessity seems to exist at present respecting the doctrine of retribution. Three elements in it appear to demand emphasis.

1. It is essential to the doctrine of retribution that it should be held with an intensity of conception which shall justify *the use of the biblical emblems of the future punishment of sin.* This suggests one point at which a perfectly honest mind may unconsciously let in a flood of error. As pictured rather than defined by the biblical symbols, the doctrine has an intense severity which is abhorrent to some of the profoundest instincts of our nature. The glare of it scorches the natural eye. We instinctively turn from it with consternation. We ask, Is there not something unreal, Oriental, hyperbolic, in these fearful emblems? Were they not designed for a bygone age? May not our Occidental and modern civilization treat them as obsolete? or, if not obsolete to the modern pulpit, should they not be restricted to preach-

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ing addressed to natures exceptionally sensuous and depraved?

President Edwards's extreme and extra-biblical painting of the future woe has been sometimes defended on the ground that he was preaching to savages. To their notions of penal justice, fire was a familiar element. They used it in their own administration of savage law, and they bore it without flinching. Their torpid sensibilities could not be quickened into fear of God or man by any thing less terrific. May not the whole scenery of the retributive life hereafter, as depicted in the Scriptures, be in a similar way restricted, and to us made void of meaning? Down the sloping plane indicated by these queries, entirely honest and reverent inquiry on the subject may be in danger of sliding, to its own hurt. The danger grows with the growth of educated sensibilities.

Yet, when we turn to the word of God, there these emblems of eternal woe stand, as real and as lurid as when they were first painted. What they meant then, they mean now. Whatever was the range of their application then, it is now. Fire, the lake of fire, the flame of brimstone, the undying worm, the gnashing of teeth, the bottomless pit, the place prepared for the devil and his angels, —these are all as if written yesterday on a flaming scroll in the sky. They were uttered by One who came to express to the world the *ultimate* thoughts of God. No hint appears that they belong to an obsolescent theology. No promise is given of any

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alleviation of their terrors in the coming ages. They were originated also by Him who came to represent, above all other teachings, the *love* of God. Yet not a hint is uttered that they need any glossary to explain them into consistency with the divine benevolence. The very Person of divine love utters them as calmly as if they were the picture of a summer's morning. He has left us no intimation that they need any reticent treatment, or that, in any golden age to come, they ever will need it, to vindicate the ways of God to men. The scroll is unrolled before our startled vision, and left there, think what we may of it, and do what we will with it.

2. Equally essential to the integrity of the doctrine of retribution is *the element of its endless duration.* Unbiased readers of the Scriptures are substantially a unit in the belief, that, interpreted as a whole, they teach this beyond reasonable doubt. Whatever be the sense of the crucial word on which this phase of the doctrine rests in certain proof-texts, it does not rest on that word alone, or in chief. The implications of the Bible are an invincible cordon of proof in its defense. As a system, the biblical theology necessitates it. That theology is fatally enervated, if deprived of this element of eternity in the threatening of penal justice. By the absence of it, the moral government of God in its penal administration is revolutionized.

It will never do, then, for a man to say, "I be-

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lieve in retribution, in a future retribution, in a fearful retribution, in a retribution the magnitude of which reaches to the limit of human thought; I believe in all that our Lord meant by his intensest utterances: but of the element of *time* I affirm not; that is not essential to the inner sense of the divine word." The answer is prompt and clear: The Scriptures do affirm of the element of time. They employ language which means that, if it means any thing. They disclose a system of correlated truths which are built together like an arch, of which not one stone can be spared; and, of that system of faith, the endlessness of conscious life in the suffering of penal woe is an element most vital to all the rest. So the *consensus* of the ages has read the record: so the great historic creeds of the Church have interpreted and re-affirmed it. To deny it is to deny the authority of the common sense of men in the interpretation of that of which it is amply competent to speak.

The truth on this point may be reflected from another mirror. If the "time-element" is not essential to the fullness of the doctrine, why care for it on the side of limitation more than on that of eternity? If time indefinite and time endless are practically the same in the intensity which they kindle in the doctrine, why not accept the time endless as the equivalent of both? Why not thus gain the advantage, in popular discourse at least, of making the Scriptures mean that which

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to the popular mind they seem to mean? Why change the ancient conception, if the change means nothing? The fact most vital to the argument is, that the change does mean something. The two conceptions, of infinite duration and indefinite duration, are not the same to the common sense of men. When affirmed of retributive woe, the change from endlessness to indefiniteness does diminish the fearful intensity of the truth. It introduces untold possibilities of relief. It does lift off that which, to the majority of minds, is the chief weight, from the intolerable burden of the "wrath of God." This is the reason why our affrighted and tortured sensibilities shrink from the ancient faith, and seek this cloud-land. It is because here eternity is veiled by something which is less than eternity. This does encroach upon the very substance of the faith. Otherwise, men would not crave it, as they do, in their search after God's meaning.

3. The present *trend* of inquiry on the subject gives special prominence to another element in the doctrine of retribution. It is that of the *decision of the retributive destiny by the experience of the present life.* On this point, also, it will not do for a religious teacher to say, "I do not know." He ought to know. Inspired instructors assume that they do know. If any one thing is made clear by the whole drift and structure of revelation, it is this, that probation begins and ends with this life. Our Lord's teachings suggest neither doubt of

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this fact nor exception to it. Apostolic instructions suggest neither. This is not a subject on which it is reasonable to believe that a revelation from heaven has taught nothing. The when and the where of probation enter into the very fact of probation. The Scriptures furnish as much evidence that our probation began in a former world, as that it will be continued or supplemented in a world to come. Regenerate character started into being here may be improved, developed, finished, in a future life which is not the perfected heavenly life. But this is education, and education is not probation. It is probation which determines the great moral distinction of character as right or wrong; and this the Bible everywhere assumes to be the work of one life and one only. On the deeds done in the body the retributive experience depends.

Nor is it safe to say that this is not an essential truth. What truth can be, in some relations of it, more essential? Is it non-essential to a dying man whether or not he is about to enter another world of probationary opportunity? To a mind awakened to the realities of eternity, and asking, "What must I do to be saved?" is it of no moment that all chances of salvation end here? Could a revival of religion ever have existed, if the pulpit had been shorn of this element of its power? Could St. Paul have preached the gospel successfully without it? Look at its bearing on the whole theory of missions to the heathen. Would it not

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seem to many minds to be a work of dubious benevolence to impose on heathen tribes the intense tests of character which Christianity creates, if without them the heathen soul might find its probation in another world? When Alexander Duff fired the heart of Scotland on the subject of missions to India, the new departure was opposed by the "Moderates" in the General Assembly, as "tending to disturb the moral chances of happy and contented Pagans." One part of the argument was, that, as they had little chance here, they might, if they were let alone, have another elsewhere. The sequence is inevitable from even the conjecture of probation in another world: "If another, surely a better world than this; let us wait for it!" So the mind instinctively reasons.

The validity of these views is not affected unfavorably by the fact that the Scriptures nowhere expressly affirm the non-existence of probation in the life to come. It is not the usage of inspiration to affirm negatives. Besides, the absence of such affirmation is rather a sign of the confidence of the inspired mind in the truth concerned. There is a class of truths, of which the presumptive and implied evidences are so conclusive, that to load them down with further proof would weaken them. Of one such truth our Lord said, "If it were not so, I would have told you." So of the doctrine now before us: if it were *not* true that probation is limited to this mundane life, a revelation from God would surely have told us. On

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such a point we need to know the truth and the whole truth. A message from heaven would have been singularly defective and delusive, if it had professed to teach us the way of salvation, and yet had been so framed as to leave such a truth in doubt. The assumptions and implications of the Bible, all pointing one way, leave us not a shadow of a reason for even the conjecture of a doubt.

The three elements of the doctrine of retribution here affirmed can not, then, be safely held in abeyance by a Christian preacher. Commonly it is true that a conscientious inquirer believes more than he thinks he does. He may tread reverently along the heights and in the depths of the truth of God. For this he should not be suspected of unbelief, though his reverent spirit may express itself in the forms of doubt. But, when it comes to such solid essentials of truth as those here considered, doubt ceases to be pertinent. One who would assume the office of a preacher, and who seeks, therefore, the indorsement of the Church, should *know what he knows.* He should be able to declare it with full and bold assertion. One positive word is worth a dozen points of interrogation.

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VII.

THE PURITAN THEORY OF AMUSEMENTS.

THE Christian theory of amusements is undergoing revision. In the process, the Puritan character is liable to suffer some foreshortening. A few historic facts may help to keep it in its true perspective.

1. One is the fact that the Puritan's theory of amusements was interwoven with his struggle for religious liberty. The famous "Book of Sports" was one of his crying grievances. No matter what was the character of such a book in itself considered, be it as harmless as a baby's rattle, it was an offense to the Puritans as an interference of the government with their religious convictions and the instructions of their religious teachers.

Human nature does not vary much under such grievances. We all resent the interloping of the State in religious matters, unless the State plants itself on "the right side." The more petty the object, the more fierce the resistance. So thought the Puritans. It was an offense to them that the king should interfere at all on such a matter.

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Still more did they object to being denounced as recusants, because they would not dance around a Maypole. When did ever a Christian government, on such a subject, refuse to let alone the consciences of full-grown matrons and bearded men?

Under such irritation it was inevitable that the Puritan conscience should grow fanatical. Conscience is elastic in more ways than one. Put it under pressure of law repellent to its convictions, and it will *bulge* into moral tumors. Tell me that I *must* do a thing of which my conscience doubts, and conscience vaults over instantly into rebellion. I find a score of reasons against that thing, which I never thought of before. A hundred texts begin to bombard it, which were Quaker guns till now.

Such is human nature. The Puritans did not rise above manhood. They reasoned and believed and acted, probably about as well as you or I should do if the governor of the Commonwealth should issue a proclamation enjoining it upon our clergy, on pain of imprisonment, to invite and urge us to attend an exhibition of Punch and Judy on Boston Common.

2. The Puritan theory of amusements was also, by stress of similar circumstances, wrought into their theory of the Lord's Day.

The Puritans were Christians of the Hebrew type. Right or wrong, they held to the Jewish ideal of the sabbath. They read it in the word of

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God; and to read was to believe. The spiritual and devotional spectacle of a Parisian or a Roman Sunday did not convince them. They did not see how much more intelligent and pure and devout such a Sunday would make a Christian people!

In those days German beer-gardens were not. The Puritans did not hanker after Spanish bull-fights. Yet they must do something on Sunday; and they had no chance to see how much more refining and sanctifying such recreations are to the character of a people than the services of Christian churches! Even the Maypole and the Morris dance did not satisfy them as means of grace. So, for the want of something better, they took to the churches.

Right or wrong, I repeat, they preferred to bull-fights and bear-baitings and May-games the old Mosaic sabbath, and the psalms and hymns which had rung through a thousand years of Christian song. Yet the laws of the realm struck right across their conscience in this thing. Grave statesmen and reverend bishops advised, and the king decreed, that the odious "Book of Sports" should be announced to his subjects from every pulpit in the kingdom on Sunday, and the sports therein recorded should be practiced in the afternoon, after the church service.

How reasonable would anybody's theory of amusements be likely to be, if back of it, and inextricably intertwined with it, there lay such a flagrant outrage upon religious liberty and the

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sense of religious propriety? The surest way to set a man's conscience to inventing reasons against a harmless thing is to back it up by tyrannical auxiliaries. Under such friction, conscience de velops a sharp polarity. Tell me that I *must*, on pain of the pillory, invite the Park-street Church of Boston to unite with me in a game of football on Sunday afternoon, at four o'clock, and exhilarating to the religious emotions as that game may be for aught that I know, the chances are ten to one, that, within a week, my conscience will declare with the solemnity of a revelation from heaven, that football is a sin. That is human nature. The Puritans were men.

How often would the Rev. Dr. Manning and the Rev. Phillips Brooks read a proclamation from the governor, inviting their congregations, after the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on a Sunday afternoon, to go out and dance around a pole on Beacon Hill? Would not their congregations be likely to hear some "godly and painful sermons," as the Puritan critics used to describe good preaching, on the claims of the dance upon a Christian people? Would not hearers be apt to follow up the painstaking blast of the preacher by something more substantial than a sermon? I would not insure the conscience of St. Paul against some morbid extremes of faith, if hawked at by such beaks of petty tyranny.

3. The Puritan theory of amusements was identified with what they believed to be the Christian

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theory of life. They never thought of the thing as apart by itself. Whether dancing was a sin, or card-playing was a sin, or play-going was a sin, *per se*, they cared not one whit. They had little to say or do about sins *per se*. They were the most practical men that ever lived. They were a race of Benjamin Franklins. They sifted every thing as a matter of real life. They did this in dead earnest.

This question of amusements, therefore, was to them a *representative* question, in which was involved the whole spirit of Christian living. They brought to its discussion the whole force of their intense religious nature. In their very make they were intense men. They were anthracite on fire. Without flame or crackle or smoke, theirs was solid heat, burning stilly day and night. Such intensity of moral being they brought to all questions of practical life.

Such men felt no need of amusements. How could they? They were not born, as some men appear to be, at hap-hazard, without an aim in living, and with no power to create one. Their happiness did not depend on cat's-cradle and push-pin. They did not know the meaning of the word "*ennui*." They came into this world as apostles. They came because they were sent. The echo of the voice which created them always sounded in their ears, and heralded their steps. Theirs was a great mission. Their souls were straitened till it was accomplished. When invited, urged, bribed,

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cajoled, commanded, threatened, browbeaten, to induce them to dance around a Maypole on the village green, they calmly said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

That which seemed to weaker natures a harmless or needful recreation seemed to them frivolity. When charged with excessive precision, said one of them for answer, "I have a precise God to deal with." They saw no record that Christ danced around poles, or amused himself with a jack-of-spades, or laughed at clowns and harlequins, or figured at masquerade balls. As they read his life, they saw him seeking relief from life's burdens in the companionship of brothers and sisters, in the homes of Bethany, in the society of angels, in communion with God. They saw that to him midnight prayer took the place of midnight revels. They honestly tried to live as Christ lived. Why should they not?

Right or wrong, they believed this to be the true theory of life; and, what is more, they in good measure lived it. They enjoyed it. As a class, they were the happiest of mortals. If ever in this world men enjoyed life, they did, whenever tyranny would let them alone. And, when it would not, they entertained each other with songs in prisons, and broke out with doxologies at the stake.

It may be well enough to revise their theory of amusements for later times and new generations. The constitutions of States rarely last a century

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without change: still less should a popular theory of recreations. We may wisely let up somewhat of the Puritan pressure upon the modern conscience. We may bid God-speed to anybody who thinks he can improve in this respect the usages of a Christian people. By all means, let us give him a hearing. Specially may we extend the law of Christian liberty in this thing. We may trustfully leave it to every man's conscience to say what recreations, in themselves innocent (as almost all recreations are), will be a help to him in godly living.

But, after all, who can fail to see that the spirit of the Puritans on this subject was the Christian spirit? Who can help seeing that improvement, if it comes, must come from the same spirit? Theirs was the spirit of a live conscience. It was the spirit of humble inquiry: it sought wisdom from God. It was the conservative spirit: it leaned to the safe side of moral questions. It was the profound spirit: it sought happiness in duties, rather than in rights.

It is very easy to fling at the Puritans in this matter, but it is very weak. Every dog must have his bay at the moon, but healthy men sleep through it. So disparagement of the Puritans does not disturb sound thinkers. The world has outlived the wit of it. The libel of the "Blue Laws" has ceased to be amusing. If we could stay long enough to answer such disparagement, our answer would be to point to the *men* whom

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the Puritan theories of life created. Not till the improved theories give us better men and better women, can we wisely believe that they *are* improvements. Not till children trained under such improvements turn out to be more Christlike men and women, more prayerful, more self-denying, more useful, happier, too, in the profound sense of spiritual joy, can we safely admit that *their* fathers are wiser than *our* fathers. For that proof the world must wait a while, — must wait long enough for us to do some things which the world is in more pressing need of than of an increase of amusements and of idle time.

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VIII.

THE CHRISTIAN THEORY OF AMUSEMENTS.

CERTAIN incidental principles are essential to a *working* theory.

1. It must be a theory which can be made to seem reasonable to youthful inquiry.

There is a period of transition from youth to manhood, in which authority must take reason into partnership. That is the period at which the question of amusements is the most practical and yet most critical. Fathers and mothers find that their parental authority is no adequate answer to filial questionings. Youth investigates *de novo* the family traditions. The ethics of the fathers undergo revision. The query often sends a Christian parent to his closet, How shall the usage of a Christian family hold its own against the usage of the world?

At that period, the Christian use or disuse of amusements must be sustained by reasons which *are* reasons. They must be obvious and conclusive. So far as they are prohibitory, they must leave no open questions; still less must they be involved in refinements of casuistry.

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To illustrate by a case in point. Are not Christian fathers often sensible, in their argument with growing sons, that the traditionary objections to card-playing are not conclusive? Does not the stereotyped argument in the negative seem weak to ingenuous minds? Are not the distinctions often made between that and other games fallacious? I suspect that there is not a little of secret practice of forbidden games, not because of willful sin, but by reason of unsatisfactory argument against them. We have not carried the conscience of our sons and daughters with us, because we have not carried their common sense.

This is an evil under the sun. When a time-honored feature of Christian practice is thus nonsuited in the court of youthful investigation, it needs to be reconsidered. Either the argument for it must be re-enforced, or its claims should be abandoned. Better the surrender than the enforcement by conservative authority alone.

2. We must have a theory of amusements which requires no concealments in our practice.

If any weakness is more fatal than another to a principle of morals, it is the admission of secret practices under it. Right has no love for the dark. Light is sown for the righteous. That I may indulge myself in amusements behind lock and key which I may not enjoy with open windows; that I may do in a strange city that which I must not do in my home; that I may seek entertainments privately to which I would not invite

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my wife and daughter; that I may attend recreations in Naples which I denounce in New York; that I may do where I am known only as a layman what I must not do where I am known as a clergyman; or that I may do as a man what I must not do as a churchman, — all these things are offenses to sound morals.

That any theory of amusements requires or admits of such secret licenses as these is *prima facie* evidence against it. Blunt men of the world will denounce such ethics as the ethics of a sneak. If any thing will bear the light in this world, it is Christian living. That needs no apologies, and seeks no cover. The very meanest form of pharisaism is that which is ascetic in public and epicurean in private. The very worst use a man can make of his conscience is to lay prohibitory restrictions on other men which he declines to accept himself. Our Saviour gave a title to such men which is akin to the rattlesnake.

Yet is not Christian example on the subject of amusements often fatally invalidated by inconsistencies of this kind? The most senseless advice I ever heard of was that given by a Christian father to his son: "I do not say *pro* or *con* about card-playing, but it must not be practiced in my house." It is not surprising that that boy has gone to sea.

A sermon has been preached against the theaters of New York, which the preacher could not have known enough to deliver if he had not at-

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tended the theaters of London. The usefulness of such sermons was never worth their cost. In Christian living we must first, and above all things else, be men. We must live above ground, and not burrow.

3. We must have a theory which admits of no suspense of conscience in practice; that is to say, positive decisions of conscience must cover the whole ground of our practice. It is a fatal weakness in any theory of morals, if it leaves conduct to swing loose in some things for the want of an opinion. To be obliged to say, "I do not know," when my conduct is all the while assuming that I ought to know, is a fraud upon principle as well as upon example. No man's example can have authority, because no man's principle deserves it, if it is thus cramped in its range by suspense of conscience.

Yet is not this the weak point in the practice of some Christians respecting amusements? We do not mean to be disloyal to conscience; but certain indulgences we do not bring into the court of conscience, or, if we do, we have never pressed for a verdict. We therefore do things on which we have no theory of right and wrong. It is much easier to obey a public opinion than it is to create one. This we do, when we accept worldly usage as our law with a silent conscience. The rudder swings loose, and the ship drifts.

Such was not the way of Christ. When did he ever act with a speechless conscience? What one

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thing did he ever do on which he had no opinion, and could give no reason? When did he ever permit the world's usage to become a law to him, for the want of a conscience quick and positive? "The world was not his friend, nor the world's law." Neither are they ours. He never yielded to it a matter of conscience by default. Why should we?

4. We must have a theory, which, in its practical working, will not alienate from us the sympathies of the great majority of God's people.

The Christian Church being what it is, no man, on any question of practical morals, can afford to stand alone. This is specially true respecting things of secondary importance, like the amusements of a people. No man can for such a cause isolate himself from the great body of spiritual Christians, without loss. If we achieve all that we claim, we get but a minor good: if we sacrifice to it our affiliation with God's people, or theirs with us, we suffer an immeasurable evil.

Oblivion of this truth is apparent, often, in the spirit in which the Christian law of amusements is discussed. It is debated too warmly as a question of individual liberty. But as such is it worth debating? Liberty in such matters is not worth its cost, if we gain it at the expense of Christian fellowship.

There is more than loss of influence in such isolation: there is loss of certain fine elements of character which no man or woman should be will-

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ing to part with. There is loss of a wise Christian modesty. It is possible, but not probable, that the individual is right in his dissent from the instinct of the Christian Church. He *may* be inspired above his peers, but such is not the usual method of divine revelations. His self-conceit feeds upon his modesty, if he believes himself thus exalted.

There is a loss of fraternal affection also. It is a selfish thing in me to stand up against the current of Christian feeling for my right to attend a theater or a masquerade. My combative nature ought not to be roused against good men and praying women for a mask and a farce. They can afford it; but can I? Sooner or later I must come to myself, and grieve over my irreparable loss.

Is there not food for reflection in this view, which a certain class of Christians need for their own healthy digestion of the Christian law of recreations?

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IX.

IS CARD-PLAYING A CHRISTIAN AMUSEMENT?

Is it right? Is it expedient? Something must in fairness be conceded to the affirmative. It must be admitted, so far as Puritan authority bears upon the question, that the Puritan casuistry was infected with Judaism, to the detriment of Christian liberty, in making religion consist so largely as it did in obedience to *prohibitions*. Our Puritan fathers were not emancipated to the extent of apostolic liberty from the judaizing spirit. That a change is in progress in Christian sentiment on the subject can not be denied.

The advocates of Christian card-playing are correct, also, in claiming that the distinction which it has been common to make between games with cards and other games of *chance* is fallacious. Any father who has attempted to argue with a quick-witted son in college on that theory must have felt misgivings, to say the least, as to the soundness of his reasoning. For one, I must give it up. The principle that it is a sin to make a frivolous appeal to Providence by the throw of dice is a fair subject of debate. But, if claimed

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in one game, it must be conceded in all. On that principle, to toss up a penny is a sin.

The argument from *association* fares scarcely better against the modern card-playing for amusement. "Cards are the instruments of the gambling-hell. Touch not a thing so saturated with the fumes of the pit." The Puritans made much of this. In later times it has not been easy to answer it with a Christian conscience. It was one of the singular anomalies in casuistry, that the very same public opinion which authorized the Rev. Dr. Nott, sixty years ago, to obtain a half-million of dollars for Union College by a lottery, upheld laws forbidding card-playing.

But now we are told by those who are learned in the devices of Satan, that cards have ceased to occupy that guilty pre-eminence; that whist especially is rarely used by gamesters; that their vice has monopolized the roulette-table, the game of billiards, and even the old-fashioned children's game of dominos, which in our childhood we were taught to consider as innocent as cherry-stones. The argument from ungodly association, therefore, if pleaded, must expel dominos from our nurseries, rather than cards from our parlors.

It must, in fairness, be conceded, also, that games of chance, cards included, may be innocently used as a *sanitary* expedient. In asylums for the insane they are relied upon as among the staple means of occupying lightly a diseased brain. One excellent officer of a church within

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my knowledge died insane, whose reason and life might, in the judgment of his physicians, perhaps have been saved, if his conscience had permitted him to while away the weary hours of convalescence with whist and backgammon.

The philosophy of the sanitary effect of games of chance is not obscure. The disease of a congested brain is a deluge of thinking. Serious thinking is logic. Its *continuity* is its bane. It is a chain of iron. The sleepless spirit falls under a bondage to it more bitter than fetters to hand or foot. The *train* of thought, as we call it, becomes to the burning brain worse than the folds of the serpents to the limbs of Laocoön. Power of will can not break it. Sleep becomes impossible. The victim is in the condition of the Chinese criminal, doomed to the torture of enforced insomnia by the beating of a bell thrown over his head, till raving mania ends the scene. Any thing gives hope which can break up logical continuity of brain-work. This the game of chance will often do; and, the more abundant the element of chance, the better. The fortuitous complications of whist reduce brain-*work* to brain-*play*; and that is just what the raging nervous centers crave. Hence the universal use of chance-games in insane-asylums.

Why may they not be as useful in some Christian homes? Two Christian friends once met at a sanitarium. Both were suffering from overworked brains. Both were threatened with in-

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sanity. One of them has since died of the disease which then oppressed him. Both had been directed by their physicians to relieve the tedium of their useless hours by whist. They debated the matter as friends of Christ, and members of Christ's church. Deliberately and prayerfully they revived the little they had known of the game in their youth, and spent many evenings in that amusement. They did it without a ripple of condemning conscience. They used to go from the weekly prayer-meeting under the same roof, to the private room of one or the other, and played whist an hour or two before retiring for the night. It was their most effective and harmless soporific. Was whist, under those conditions, a sin?

The apology for card-playing is fairly entitled to whatever of support it may derive from these concessions, and some others of less moment. Two other considerations, however, it seems to me, should, except in cases of mental disease or its premonitions, decide Christian practice in the negative.

One of these is the deference which is due to the Christian judgment of a very large and eminently spiritual portion of the Christian Church. It is a serious thing to dissent from the church of Christ upon any matter of importance affecting public morals. No reverent and thoughtful Christian will do it heedlessly or defiantly. There is a religious *Bohemianism* which prides itself on its flings of dissent at the "bigotry" and the "nar-

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rowness" of the Church, which is not worthy either of a Christian, or a man. It is below the respect of either. Even if the abstract liberty be with the individual, the law of Christian fellowship demands the waiving of an individual right in things non-essential, as all mere amusements are, if the overwhelming voice of the Christian body be against it.

How, then, stands the judgment of the Church upon the question in hand? In the Catholic and Episcopal, and perhaps Lutheran churches, the innocence of this amusement is not often questioned. In considerable fragments of the Presbyterian, the Reformed, and the Congregational churches, the practice of it has of late years been gaining ground.

But, with these exceptions, it must be said that the voice of the great bulk of Evangelical churches is at present in the negative. In the rural churches especially, the sentiment of the olden time remains intact. A bishop of the Methodist Church has recently testified that that branch of the Church is almost a unit against card-playing. Probably the same is true, outside of cities certainly, of the Baptist Church. A large majority of the Presbyterian, the Reformed, and the Congregational churches, also, hold fast the traditions of the fathers.

This makes up a volume of weighty testimony. The fact is noteworthy, that it is emphasized in times of religious revival. Right or wrong in

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theory, it deserves deference in practice. Any man will respect it who retains enough of Christian dignity to respect any thing which outweighs his own opinion. True, the *degree* of deserved deference to the Christian judgment of others is a variable quantity. When a single, and we must think an idle, Methodist conference in Ohio pronounces by solemn vote against the rural game of croquet, intelligent Christian opinion everywhere else reasonably demurs. Such a vote is provincial. It carries with it none of the authority of the Church Universal.

When the revered Dr. Finney of Oberlin solemnly and publicly reproves the mirth of the hard-worked clergy of the Congregational Church, assembled for an hour's recreation at a banquet in Brooklyn, we reasonably withstand our reverend father to his face: "No, sir: in this thing you are ascetic and monastic. 'The Son of man came eating and drinking, and ye say he hath a devil.'"

When a bowling-alley was first appended to the gymnasium of the Andover Seminary, I received a long and very solemn letter of remonstrance from an excellent Christian woman. She probably died in the belief that the Spirit of God departed from Andover at the advent of that snare of Satan. The reverend and honorable Board of Trustees did not revoke their action at such a call. What would my friend have said to the profligacy of the trustees of Princeton College in introducing a billiard-table?

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These cases are clear. But the case is very different with the judgment of an overwhelming majority of the Evangelical Church on a subject on which, till recent years, the Evangelical body was almost unanimous in the same direction. Such a witness is worthy of respect. Such a body of believers have a right to ask that we should not so practice our individual liberty as to wound their feelings by doing that which is only an amusement to us, but which to them seems an infliction of a wound upon the Lord himself. A believer who has a tender sense of Christian fellowship, it should seem, would not do that thing. Nevertheless, to the Master he standeth or falleth, not to you or me.

The other consideration is that of the danger of the example to those to whose consciences games of chance are not matters of indifference. Many such there are, the children of Christian families, who have been trained in the earlier school of casuistry on the subject. In their present state of religious culture they can not play a game of cards innocently. Multitudes there are, also, of the world outside, whose inherited conscience on the subject condemns this amusement, even though they practice it. To them it is a symbol of ungodliness and a badge of Satan. They feel it to be unworthy of one making profession of Christ. It is one of the snares of the world, which, if they should become Christians, they would feel bound in conscience to put away. They may join

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a Christian card-player to his face, and berate him roundly as a hypocrite behind his back. From no tribunal do professing Christians receive severer judgment than from those with whom they unite in pleasures which the conscience of the world condemns.

Here applies St. Paul's principle respecting the meats offered to idols: "Take heed, lest this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block. If any *see* thee, shall not the conscience of him be emboldened? Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died? If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth."

Is not this good sense, as well as sound Christianity? And is it not pat to the purpose? Free as we may feel in individual conscience, and much as we may desire that all should come into our Christian liberty in this thing, yet is it worth to us the sacrifice of one iota of Christian fellowship? Still more, is it worth to us the imperiling of an unsaved brother's soul? Abstinence seems in this thing, as in reference to the drinking customs of society, to be the true law of Christian fraternity and of common philanthropy.

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X.

THE QUESTION OF SUNDAY CARS.

Rev. Dr. Humphrey, when president of Amherst College, used to preach frequently in the adjoining towns. To do this, he often crossed the Connecticut River on Sunday morning in a ferry-boat, and returned by the same conveyance in the evening. In accordance with the pious usage of those times, he endeavored to "improve his opportunities," in imitation of Him who sat and talked by the well of Samaria. He unexpectedly met his match one morning in the quick-witted ferryman. "Oh, yes!" said the latter, "I want to save my soul. I believe all you say; but the fact is, I have no time for such things. On week-days I have to work my farm while the boy works the ferry, till, when the nights come, I am too sleepy to know whether I have a soul. Then, when Sunday comes, I have to be here to carry you parsons across the river. I haven't had a passenger this morning, except parsons." So, in substance, the story ran, as Dr. Humphrey related it to a friend. He went home and revised his observance of the Lord's Day, and the ferryman lost a Sunday customer.

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We pass on about thirty years, and a tall, grave man, over sixty years of age, whose look reminds one of "that disciple whom Jesus loved," is seen walking from the west bank of the River Schuylkill at Philadelphia, on a Sunday morning, and after preaching twice, and presiding at a third service in the evening, walking back to his country-home, while horse-cars, a score or more, are passing him back and forth. The distance is over three miles each way. It is the Rev. Albert Barnes, who thus endeavors to honor his faith in the Christian sabbath, which he devoutly believes to be violated by the running of the street-cars on that day. He has lately led his brethren and the good people of Philadelphia in a protest against the innovation, and his Sunday walks are his individual tribute to the same end.

We pass on fifteen years more. The scene is shifted, we will suppose, to an academic town not a thousand miles from either the Connecticut or the Schuylkill River. The steam-cars run to and from the neighboring metropolis, not as frequently, but as regularly, on the Lord's Day as on any other. Conductors, brakemen, engineers, oilmen, and other adjuncts of a railway train, — and we are told that a well-manned train requires the service, on the average, of about twenty men, — are employed as on a week-day. They know no difference between secular and holy time. Life to them is one long treadmill of secularities. If they should chance to be moved, by a tract given

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to them by a Sunday traveler, to petition that their right to the Lord's Day and its refreshing liberties should be restored to them, they would probably be told that railway trains can not run on scruples; that they require a steel conscience as well as steel rails; and that, if the petitioners do not think so, their services are no longer wanted. A hundred hungry men to each one of them stand ready to take their places. Wife and children at home must have bread; and, if the petitioners try to reason the matter with their superiors, they probably end with pocketing their wages — and their scruples. The train runs as before, and twenty men have no sabbath; and the consciences of twenty men are indurated, it may be, for a lifetime.

On the line of that railroad some two or three hundred preachers, more or less, live; and many of them, not a large minority perhaps, but an increasing one, use the cars as freely on Sunday as on Monday. Anomalies easily grow to usages in such things. Distance appears to have little concern with the license which these itinerant ministers take with sacred time. They ride any distance which can be traveled in season for the morning service, and nobody audibly questions it. Nevertheless, it *is* questioned. The traveling ministers on the Lord's Day are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses in more worlds than one. Approving angels, we trust, hear their faithful sermons and devout intercessions, — approving,

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that is, the sermon and the prayer; but three or four hundred young students in the academic town listen also, thinking, the while, not so much of prayer and sermon as of that which went before. They ask each other, and ask their instructors, "*Is it right* for these ministers to go and come in the Sunday trains? If right for them, why not for us?" Next Sunday they ask leave to go to Boston to attend a "sacred concert" on the Common, — one of the improvements of these latter days for the spiritual culture of that goodly city and its suburbs. And when they receive a negative, and are required to attend church and hear the ministers instead, they do not quite see the reasons of things. Is anybody else wiser?

Dr. Humphrey, Mr. Barnes, and these later itinerant divines, have all, doubtless, agreed in one thing. They have all lauded with unmeasured respect that act of the Pilgrims at Plymouth in 1620, in which they bore witness to their reverence for the Christian sabbath by remaining, with their sick ones and little children, another day in the cabins of their leaky ship, after a tedious and unhealthy passage, that they might not use unworthily the Lord's time.

Which of these reverend, and, we would willingly believe, equally conscientious men, have been *right* about this thing? If the query admits of doubt, which have chosen the safer side? Have the Pilgrims probably discovered, in a more tonic atmosphere than that of Plymouth Bay, that they

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bore ascetic penance in "The Mayflower" and "The Speedwell" for a sickly scruple? In the deed which we recall so reverently on Forefathers' Day, was their tribute to history to the end of time, only a freak of superstition, — the thing, which, above all others, they abhorred? Did Dr. Humphrey and Mr. Barnes, in their modest imitation of the fathers, expose to the world's contempt the fussiness of a pettifogging conscience? Ought we to place all these reverend men, in our estimate of character, by the side of George Fox, in his praying over the cut of his Quaker coat and the width of the rim of his Quaker hat? If so, it is time that we all see it thus, and see the reason why. Such feeble brethren as Dr. Humphrey and Mr. Barnes let us shield in compassionate silence. On Forefathers' Day let us frankly place the scrupulous delay of the landing at Plymouth alongside of Tower Hill in Salem. Let us teach our children that both represent obsolete blunders of a conscience not illumined by the dawn of these better days. Then, for ourselves, let us endeavor to mount the spiritual heights of the "sacred concerts" on Boston Common, in which the Metropolitan Band shall lead our devotions in (we quote from the advertisements) the "concert-waltzes of Strauss," and "La Somnambula of Cavallini."

An eminent Boston merchant, a man not given to narrow sabbatarianism, puts this whole question of the observance of the Lord's Day in a

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nutshell, in words which suburban ministers may wisely take in admonition to themselves. He says, in a letter which lies before me, "The wedge once entered, there is no resisting its progress. We bid fair to have a Parisian sabbath here before long, unless Christian people are willing to *deny themselves*, and do nothing which may give their neighbor an excuse for taking another step." The suburbans of a large city are, to a great extent, responsible for its moral decline. They help to fill its theaters; they patronize its "sacred concerts," which are a burlesque on the name; they fill large spaces in its Sunday trains. Cut off the suburban patronage, and could one of these sources of detriment to public morals be supported? Doubtful.

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XI.

WOMAN-SUFFRAGE AS JUDGED BY THE WORKING OF NEGRO-SUFFRAGE

A FALSE principle wrought into real life always works itself out in disaster. Nemesis watches it. Its malign nature will out relentlessly. Its working is like that of demoniacal possession: the dispossession comes with outcry and convulsions.

Such is the naked fact in the issue of our experiment in giving the ballot to the negro of the plantation. We put the most delicate blossom of civilization into the hands of a herd of ignorance and brutishness. We uplifted men to the ultimate height of republican freedom, whose donkeys knew nearly as much of its responsibilities as they did. We drew from the rice-fields to the polls men who in some instances deposited there circus-bills, hotel dinner-bills, and copies of the Lord's Prayer. We threw open halls of legislation which the finished culture of the land had graced, to men who not only could neither read nor write, but whose guffaws in derision of parliamentary order, as they sat with feet higher than their heads, betrayed scarcely more of intelligence than

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the bray of an ass. The Rhetts and Legares, and Hamptons and Calhouns of a great State, have been succeeded in part by Sambo and Pompey, and Cæsar and Jerusalem.

The issue, to the most sanguine believers in the necessity of the experiment, must seem to be a dead failure. Not only has it breeded bad legislation, and repudiated debts, but the fundamental law of representative government — that by which majorities rule — has been abrogated by force. The process has been so revolutionary, that we have had to coin a new word to express it. "Bulldoze" will live long in our language in token of the wretched business.

Political partisans may gloss it over as they please; yet few non-partisans in the land doubt that minorities rule to-day in South Carolina and Louisiana, and probably in three other Southern States. Govs. Chamberlain and Packard are *de jure* chief magistrates of their respective Commonwealths. They have the sympathy of thousands who feel compelled, by a necessity which knows not law, to support the policy which disowns them. Their rivals govern only by the right of a usurpation, which, in theory, has supplanted republican government by a tyranny. The same revolution extended through the country would make every State government a despotism, and the form of representative rule a farce.

Yet we yield to it as a necessity. A necessity which is above law is the issue of the first false

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move which gave the franchise to men who were neither fitted for it, nor able even to understand it. Through no fault of theirs — poor souls! — they were lifted to an eminence which they had never known enough even to ask for. The sympathies of the best minds of the nation must be with them, rather than with their lordly superiors. They have done as well, in their unnatural elevation, as anybody could have been expected to do, if suddenly and volcanically tossed into responsibilities so vastly above their education and their history.

But it is no kindness to them to suffer our compassion to blind us to the facts of their condition, which both they and we must now face together. The facts of the situation have driven our theories out of sight. We can not help seeing that there are things in the administration of States which are more potent than numbers. We have to count other things than heads, white or black. We must confess that intelligence, culture, knowledge of the art of government, the habit of rule, pride of ancestry and historic prestige, have more real power in ruling a great State than the brute force of hands. The "bayonets" which "think" beat back thrice the number of those which do not think. Upset society to-day by plunging these thinking forces underneath, and heaving ignorance and inherited debasement, and the traditions of slavery, to the top, and the first thing we learn is that society will not stay thus upset. It inevi-

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tably turns over again into its natural condition, stands on its natural feet, and erects again its natural head, let the majority of the bits of paper, in or out of the ballot-box, count for whom they may. The head comes uppermost, let the hands do what they will.

Color and hair, and nose and lips, have nothing to do with such a revolution and counter-revolution. *Any* race in South Carolina, fresh from the auction-block and the lash of the rice-field, could no more govern an intelligent and cultured minority, heirs to the *history* of South Carolina, than a herd of buffaloes could govern Minnesota. To this *fact* of political science our whole theory of government by majorities has been forced to succumb in a day. Think what we may of it, the fact is there, and our theory is nowhere. Such is the exorcism of the body politic, by which it rids itself of a tampering with the franchise which was *against nature*. The hopeless despotism under which New York is drifting towards bankruptcy is only another fruit of the same reckless extension of suffrage at the North. Such silent revolutions are mightiest issues of apparently smallest forces. They resemble that in which an ounce of water in midwinter may rend asunder a ton's weight of granite in a night.

Where, now, is the parallel between negro-suffrage at the South and the proposed suffrage of woman? In respect to intelligence and culture, and their prerogatives, it does not exist at all.

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Whether it exists in respect to the instinct and capacity of government, may be an open question. But the parallel is clear in this, which is the ultimate fact in both cases, that the ballot is given, or supposed to be given, not to exceptional classes, few in number, but to the half of the population *which has no physical power to defend it.* They can neither take it by force, nor hold it if assailed by force.

"Who would be free, *themselves* must strike the blow."

A principle of political destiny is expressed in these words, than which gravitation is not more sure. Liberty, such as is involved in the gift of suffrage, is impossible, on any large scale, to a race, or nation, or tribe, or class, which has not power to *take* the right, if it is a right, and to hold it against all aggressors. This is the secret, back of all other causes, of the failure of negro-suffrage at the South. Excess of numbers by a few thousands or tens of thousands is of no account, where the cultured brain, the heirloom of centuries, is all on the side of the minority. The negro majority, in receiving the ballot, received an elephant. They did not know what to do with it; and, in the very first real conflict about it, they could not defend it by force of arms. Such a majority is not fitted for the ballot; nor is it their right, in any sense which implies a blessing in it, till they reach a stage of civilization in which they can not be "bulldozed" out of it.

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Before the war, when servile insurrection was threatened, the Southern planter used to smile, saying, "One *gentleman* is a match for three negroes." So he was, so long as the traditions of a free race backed him up, and the traditions of a slave race weighted the negro down. Why did Gov. Chamberlain call on the National Government for troops to execute the will of the legal majority of South Carolina? With twenty thousand able-bodied majority at his beck, why did he not summon *them* to execute their own will in the defense of their own rights and his? Gov. Rice would have done that in Massachusetts. Gov. Robinson would have done it in New York. The Governor of Ohio proclaimed the natural law of State government, when he was importuned, in the midst of the late labor strikes, to telegraph to Washington for troops, and replied, "I will not ask for one bayonet from the President till every loyal citizen of Ohio is whipped." Why did not Govs. Chamberlain and Packard act on the same theory?

They dared not do it. As wise statesmen and humane men, they could not do it. They knew that that would mean a war of races. They knew, that, in such a war, the weaker race must go down. They knew that numbers, unless overwhelming beyond the facts of any black majority in the South, was the least important factor in the problem. The citizens of Liberia show only a prudent estimate of the relative strength of the two races,

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by their law that no white man shall own a rood of land within the bounds of the republic. Haytiens, in their revolt against the French in the time of Toussaint L'Ouverture, showed the same shrewd foresight in the motto of one of the insurgent banners: "*One* white man too much for St. Domingo." The white race in either of the revolutionized States of the South, in such a war of races, if let alone by the North, would have been the conqueror in a month. No surer way could have been devised to remand the black race to slavery under laws of peonage, than to have initiated the war of races just then and there, at the close of a political campaign which had convulsed the nation, and ended with a disputed succession.

No: there was no hope for the negro; and in mercy to us all Gov. Chamberlain held still, though it was in his power to plunge the continent into civil war. Laws of *nature* had been disregarded in giving the franchise to majorities who were unfit for it, with no checks conservative of the ascendency of intelligence and of property; and, at the very first real trial of the principle, the retribution came. He was the true statesman who bowed in silence to the inevitable.

Is it said, in reply, that this assumes that right depends on might? I answer, Some rights do depend on might. The right of revolution does. Besides, the objection begs the question. Suffrage, abstractly considered, is nobody's "right." No "Bill of Rights" ever read that "all men are

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entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness — and the elective franchise." Suffrage is primarily a *responsibility*, and a fearful one. The "right" to it is an aftergrowth, depending on many things, of which one is the power to defend it. It is no kindness, but a fearful wrong rather, to lay it upon a crowd of beings who must fling it away in a panic at the first call to protect it by resort to arms.

Here, then, lies the parallel between the suffrage of the negro and the proposed gift of it to women. Unlike in every other point vital to the argument, the two are alike in this, except that the disadvantage of woman is fourfold that of the negro, — that the distribution of physical power renders the gift neither a right nor a blessing. That which was unnatural, because untimely, to the negro, must be for ever unnatural to woman. She could never defend it if contested by man. She could never enforce laws enacted by majorities of female voters, in opposition to men. A war of races would be a tragedy. A war of sexes would be a farce.

Moreover, legislative hostility of the sexes is no bugbear. It is not all improbable. Take but a single case. Suppose a declaration of war by a majority of female legislators, sustained by a majority of female voters. War is declared, supplies are voted, taxation is decreed, and conscription ordered, by the major voice of woman. Her natural aversion to bloodshed goes for nothing in

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the hypothesis. History shows that war and its pageantry are popular with the female sex. Its weaknesses in that direction are quite equal to man's. Once in a fight, woman is a more unreasoning animal than man. No other mobs equal those of women in ferocity. Witness the Faubourg St. Antoine.

Our late civil war was largely the work of women. Intelligent Southerners say that the social impulse which drove their section into rebellion was the *furor* of its women. I have been told by one well informed of the facts, that even South Carolina probably, and Georgia certainly, would never have seceded, but for the mordant sarcasm of their refined and cultured ladies, which made it impossible for chivalrous young men to resist the current. Few little incidents of the war so impressed upon our soldiers the intensity of Southern attachment to the "lost cause," as that of the Mississippi maiden, who, in defiance of her triumphant foes, sang "Dixie," with unbroken voice and flashing eye, while the home of her childhood was burning to the ground under their torches.

So, too, since the conflict of arms has ceased, we are told that the conflict of opinion and of feeling is kept up most bitterly by Southern women. No other class of Southern society is so difficult of "reconstruction" as its intelligent and high-born ladies. Planters, merchants, lawyers, physicians, journalists, of the South, accept the situation with

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equanimity, and her soldiers with generosity, when their wives and daughters will not permit so much as the hem of their garments to touch in the street those of their Northern sisters. When Gen. Butler was in command at New Orleans, it was the high-bred ladies of the city who spat in the faces of officers of the Federal army. Could *one* Southern *man* have been found who would have done that?

The opposition of woman to man in the prosecution of war and its collateral measures, then, is not impossible. Let that hostility express itself in legislation, and who is to execute its will? Who shall carry on the war? Who is to enforce the legislative will of woman in *any thing*, if man opposes it? The popular parody on "Woman's Will" may do for the ball-room. It is not argument: it is a wretched libel upon woman, which has neither wit nor wisdom.

In sober earnest, woman with the gift of suffrage would be just where any other half of society would be if destitute of resources to defend the gift. A majority of women, like the majority of negroes, must forego the gift whenever the frenzy or the trickery of political passions deprives them of it. In both cases, there is no power behind to protect it. In both cases, the gift of it is legislation *against nature*, though for very different reasons. Such legislation must be expected to work disaster in a hundred ways which no human wisdom can foresee. Fight with gravitation, and you are sure to be worsted in catastrophes which gravita-

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tion never would have developed if it had not been resisted. Dam up the Mississippi, and contest its passage to the Gulf, and you must reckon upon floods and inundations away back to the gorges of the Rocky Mountains. So long as water runs down hill, so long will Nature have her way in the affairs of States as well, in defiance of enactments of law, and voices of majorities.

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XII.

REFORM IN THE POLITICAL STATUS OF WOMEN.

THE unsoundness of a social or political reform is sometimes indicated by a certain *animus* which runs through the reasoning of its advocates, quite as clearly as by the inconclusiveness of the reasoning itself. With some honorable and able exceptions, this appears to be the rule in the advocacy of the reform of which the extension of the suffrage to women is the initial measure.

1. A reverent believer in the Scriptures can not but detect evidence of this distorted *animus* in the coolness with which the biblical argument in the negative is ignored by the most positive advocates of the reform. For distinction's sake, and in justice to a different class of its advocates, they may be called "the left wing" of the reform. One is reminded of the fling which used to be thrown at the Bible by the corresponding wing of the old antislavery reformers, whose answer to the objection that the Bible tolerated slavery was, "So much the worse for the Bible, then!"

If the Scriptures are clear and positive on any subject relating to the organization of society, they

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are so on this, of the position of woman in the order of nature. St. Paul defines it beyond the reach of cavil. He reasons upon it, not as an Oriental, but as a cosmopolitan. He pronounces judgment upon it, not as a priest, but as a philosopher. He goes back to the beginning of things. He finds his reason for the subordination of woman in the very act of her creation. He could not well have put the case in a way more flatly antagonistic to the opposite extreme of our day. What the inspired teacher meant to say on the subject admits of no reasonable doubt. If fire is fire, the apostle's theory of the social economy under which God placed the two sexes at the beginning, and which Christianity leaves as it finds it, makes man the head, and woman something other than the head; man the power of *government*, and woman *not* that.

Yet, notwithstanding the indubitable force of the inspired reasoning, it is scarcely ever heard of among those who chiefly give character to this modern revolution. They often ignore the biblical argument with the flippancy with which one might dismiss the law of the Koran on the subject. Inspiration goes for nothing. St. Paul is no more to the purpose than the author of the Book of Mormon. We are afraid of a reform which starts with such an *animus* towards the word of God. It is not a philosophical treatment of a great authority. It is not a judicial treatment of great precedents. It is not a Christian treatment of a revelation from heaven.

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2. A similar defect in the *animus* of its reasonings is found in the antagonism which the reform seems to foster between the sexes. Is not this the first time in the history of the race that such antagonism has assumed the dignity of a great humanitarian revolution? "The *Subjection* of Woman" is the mildest title which Mr. Mill could invent even for his philosophic and able essay on the subject, and the latest synonym is "The White Male Dynasty." The sexes are made to appear as master and servant, as usurper and victim, as tyrant and slave. Woman, as the reform will have it, lies under the *hoof* of man. Maidenhood and marriage are only different phases of the vassalage to which the sex is born. Law, the creature of man's will, admits no other destiny. So far as the reform works out its normal results, it tends to mutual suspicion and alienation. It is infusing an element of mutual defiance into our legislation on the interests of the sexes. The drift of it is to leave absolutely nothing which law can reach to their mutual confidence and affection. Its aim seems to be to barricade the sexes against each other. Our statute-books already bristle with defenses of woman against man. Marriage, therefore, as it looks in legislation, is but a truce to chronic war; and we are told that this is but the beginning of things.

Evidence is not distant that the legitimate fruit of all this is ripening in many families. Women whose gentle and trustful natures would never

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dream of a sense of servitude in their lot are told of "chimeras dire" in the very construction of the old English marriage-vow, under which duchesses and queens have "lived and loved and died" for centuries. Unsuspecting wives are tempted to believe there must be some fire where so much smoke is puffed into their faces. The relation of elder sisters to younger brothers — in some respects the most beautiful, and at the same time powerful, phase of domestic life — is often poisoned by this infection. The saddest histories in this world are unwritten. If those of certain families could be known, it would be found that the last twenty years have wrought a mournful change in many homes. The change is due chiefly to the silent repulsions produced by the agitation of this reform and by the extreme legislation which it has created. Profound instincts in both sexes are chafed into morbid remonstrance. Without a shadow of reason, wives have grown suspicious of husbands, and husbands have retaliated in kind. The ancient unity of interests has been broken up. Extreme and morbid individualism has been fostered just where it ought never to have been heard of. Persons of gentle birth and refined culture, who never would have created such a state of things, accept it, unconscious of what they do. They breathe malaria in the social atmosphere, and can not help being diseased by it. As a consequence, married life, to many innocent parties, becomes one long disappointment of the dreams of youth.

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In other cases, young mothers chafe under the indignity of household cares. Daughters unmarried become discontented with the care of aged and infirm parents, and sigh for a "mission" in some loftier "sphere," which means, in plain language, a more public sphere. They ask, "Why should we, rather than our brothers, do this drudgery? Why are we, rather than they, doomed to this uncongenial and obscure toil? Why should the pulpit, the bar, and the senate be open to them, and to us the nursery and the hospital? Some feel that there was good reason for the old Jewish prayer, "Lord, I thank thee that I was not born a woman!" Such is the drift of this innovation where the spirit of "the left wing" has full sway.

To what more probable cause than this can be attributed the ominous increase in the number of divorces, in the last two decades, in the most staid and conservative of our New-England States? The statistics published by Dr. Allen of Lowell, the Rev. Mr. Dike of Vermont, and others, threaten the rapid incoming of the most morbific of all social corruptions. Nothing else is so pestilent to public virtue as *legal* immorality. Teach woman that marriage under existing conditions is vassalage, and then divorce for "incompatibility of temper," or any other "skeleton in the house," becomes another of her "natural rights." The same teaching so adulterates public sentiment that it will sustain courts in rulings in which

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communism exults, and of which Mormonism says, "Have we not told you so?"

Is the picture overdrawn? It is to be hoped so. But thus far the worst working of this reform is secret. It is history unwritten. It is pent up in silent and sullen homes. This is one of the revolutions which come "in noiseless slippers." But its tread is none the less malign. It is like the tread of Attila the Hun, who, as the legend reads, left never a blade of grass behind. Who does not know of homes within the circle of his acquaintance in which the beginnings of this — if I may use a word of rare authority — *denaturalizing* process are visible?

3. The same passionate reasoning is seen in the recklessness with which the dignity of maternity is often flouted in the service of this social revolution. To this there are doubtless many considerate exceptions. It could not well be otherwise. Human nature, it should seem, can not often wallow so deep in its own degradation that men and women shall degrade their mothers in their theories of life. But this reform drifts towards that. Much is blurted out in angry defense of it which implies that. It is the inevitable sequence of any theory of life which assumes that woman has, or can have, or can discover, in the wide world, a "mission" more exalted than that of a mother in her nursery. Once fill a young woman's mind with the notion that it is a grander thing to be a speaker on the platform than to be a

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wife in a Christian home, that it is a nobler distinction to be a successful author than to be the happy mother of children, that it is more honorable to head a half-score of "committees" for public service than it is to be a loving daughter in a father's house, the model of refinement to younger brothers and sisters, and you can no longer find a place of honor in her thoughts for the mission of either daughter, wife, or mother. These relationships become lost ideas. They must be superlatives or nothing. The duties they involve are either honors to be proud of, or drudgeries to be got rid of. The law of nature which imposes them on woman is either the voice of God, or the voice of tyranny. In this view is seen the massive volume of argument against this reform in the title of Dr. Bushnell's book, "The Reform against Nature." Never before was so much of solid logic packed into four words as we find in this invincible thesis. When and where has it ever been answered? One might as easily answer a Minié-bullet.

4. The same absence of dispassionate argument is seen in the frequent ignoring of certain objections to the reform, which seem to its opponents to involve it in absurdity. Few organic changes affecting so radically the interests of modern life seem to us to have so few positive and relevant ideas as this has in that extreme which is now under consideration. For the most part, it revolves around two, as in the groove of

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an ellipse, and those two are assumptions. They are the intrinsic rectitude of the reform, and its "manifest destiny."

To the common judgment of men, for instance, it seems a *non sequitur* so bald that it has the look of absurdity, that suffrage should be extended to women because it is a "natural right." Natural to what? natural to whom? natural why and wherefore? the average mind questions incredulously. It finds in itself no affirmative intuitions. Has the world revolved through these thousands of years of progress without finding out till now so remarkable a discovery? Yet what "Bill of Rights" ever included it? What "Declaration of Independence," in great revolutions, ever asserted it? What "Magna Charta" ever demanded it with mailed hand? Wise men have founded empires and republics on advanced theories of liberty and equality. Yet when has statesmanship the wisest ever built republic or empire on this as its corner-stone: "All men and women are by nature equal, and are entitled to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness — and the ballot"? So the "Declaration" of 1776 ought to have read, if the claim in question is true. Why did not the revolutionary statesmen of our heroic age, delving as they did deep down among the roots of things, happen to see so obvious a right as this, if it is a right in the very nature of things? Natural rights, it is to be presumed, are not far to seek, nor hard to find. They lie near the surface, patent to the

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common sense of men. Yet somehow the common sense of men, even under the favoring conditions of an age stimulated by a revolutionary atmosphere, does not discern this right in the nature of the human mind. We charge that the claim has the look of absurdity; and all the answer we get is that it *is* a right, and has a manifest destiny.

So of other things involved in this reform, which, but for the gravity of the interests at stake, we should smile at, so unnatural do they look, at the first assertion, to the average of men. The absurdity of thrusting upon one-half of the human race a privilege which they have never asked for, and their desire of which is a thing not proved; the absurdity of imposing upon one-half of the race a duty the gravest that organized society creates, but which they have no power to defend in an emergency; the absurdity of holding woman to military service, as she must be held if she is to stand on any fair terms of equality with man in the possession of this "natural right;" the absurdity of the intermingling of the gravest duties of the court-room and the senate-chamber with those of the nursery,—these, and other like things involved in the proposed revolution and its sequences, we claim have the look of absurdity to the average sense of mankind. Yet they are commonly treated either flippantly or passionately in the attempt at rejoinder; and once and again we are told the revolution is right because it is right, and it must succeed because it will succeed.

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If any thing more specific than this is urged in reply, we still find a want of relevance which reminds us of the popular fling, which we would gladly forget, at a "woman's reason" for things. We ask, for example, for a plain answer to the argument from the biblical order of creation, in which man was first, and woman was ordained to be his helpmeet, and we are told that men beat their wives. We ask for a reverent answer to St. Paul's reasoning, and we are informed that St. Paul was a bachelor. We ask what to do with the apostle's inspired command to wives, so marked in its distinction from his commands to husbands, and we are reminded that the apostle was a Jew. We urge the impossibility of woman's defending the ballot by force of arms, and we are answered that woman is a slave. We argue the incongruity of the duties of maternity with those of the jury-box and the bar, and we are instructed gravely that men are tyrants, usurpers, brutes. We speak of the dignity of marriage and the sacredness of motherhood, and we are met with the discovery that woman has a "mission." So the changes ring on a few ideas, of which we fail to see the logical relevance to the point.

We can not help knowing that great revolutions carry with them great complications. The whole order of society is involved in them. They never end where they begin. They never do away with one institution, one usage, one abuse, and stop there. They have a course which they must run,

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intricate and inevitable. They shake the world under the tramp of their progress. Sooner or later, armed men are apt to spring up in their wake. Such must be the destiny of this one, if it succeeds. Not a single interest of society can escape it. The ballot is but the first of its demands. The whole sweep of the relation of the sexes, and all the duties and rights of both, must come under revision. Natural foundations on which organized society has been built from the beginning of time, and without which it is a thing not proved that organized society can exist at all, must be torn up, if this reform is carried consistently to its maturity. Nothing else like it exists in history. No other theory of life has ever cut every thing loose from the experience of the race, and put every thing at hazard on an unproved and untried hypothesis. If such a reform is even to be talked of in the seclusion of universities and libraries, every step in its inception should be calmly measured, every principle involved should be dispassionately studied, every argument for and against it should be weighed judicially. If it does not start right, it can end, even as a theory, only in chaos. Specially should the *animus* which controls it be reverent to the word of God, and respectful to the common sense of men.

There is a "right wing" of this reform which may command the trust of conservative and Christian men. Such men have already supported it:

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they were pioneers in it before the "left" extreme was developed. It covers especially four things; viz., the higher education of women, the extension of the range of their employments without loss of caste, their protection from swindlers in their tenure of property, and the extension of their usefulness in organized charities. My space forbids the discussion of these any further than to say of them two things. One is, that they are yet very largely on trial; and no right-minded man will do other than to welcome any results which fair and full experiment shall prove. The other is, that every true interest of woman in the experiment can be gained without complicating it with the question of suffrage, and the more wisely and quickly gained by its deliverance from the unnatural suspicions and alienations which political agitation inevitably creates. Organic improvements in social life are always most healthfully advanced when they are made to take the type, not of reform, but of development, not of revolution, but of growth.

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XIII.

THE LENGTH OF SERMONS.

A STRAW may show which way the wind blows. So the drift of opinion respecting the length of sermons indicates, as it seems to me, certain perils which we shall do well to ponder.

1. It indicates the danger of a disuse of doctrinal preaching. Any one who knows the *interior* of sermonizing knows that thorough discussion of any thing which deserves it requires time. No intelligent preacher ever did or ever will discuss the standard doctrines of our faith in sermons of a half-hour's length. Doctrinal preaching must become obsolete, is now obsolescent, under the imperious demand of the popular taste for brevity.

The surest way to make such preaching inanimate is to crowd its massive themes into thirty minutes. I once heard in the city of Boston a discourse on the nature, the necessity, the methods, the author, and the evidences of regeneration, all within thirty-five minutes. It was dryer than the chips of the ark. A chapter from the table of contents of "Knapp's Theology" would have been as impressive, and more instructive. It fell upon

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a restless audience like lead, and by no means molten lead at that.

Say what we may of the power of compression, we must not demand of a preacher impossibilities. We do *not* demand them of other public speakers. Mr. Evarts spoke four days, and Mr. Beach as many more, on the trial of Mr. Beecher. Edmund Burke spoke nine days on the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Rufus Choate once spoke four hours in prosecution for a stolen turkey. It was the speech which first made him famous. Lawyers who gain their cases wear no strait-jackets of thirty minutes.

Why do we demand of a preacher limitations which we never impose on other men who have a business of real life on hand? Is it not because, for the time being, we do not feel that theirs *is* a business of real life? There is the rub. Be it so, or not, the conclusion is foregone, that you can not have masterly discussion of the doctrines of our faith in harangues of half an hour. Under such a policy we shall eventually have a Liliputian ministry. The themes and methods of the pulpit must degenerate into claptrap. The half-hour for this generation means fifteen minutes for the next.

2. A second peril is, that our theological faith itself will become obsolete. In this matter the pew is dependent on the pulpit. The taste of the hearer will be formed by the practice of the preacher. Silence of doctrine in the pulpit means ignorance, and at last unbelief, in the pew.

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The result does not come in the form of a catastrophe. No moral convulsion scatters the faith of centuries in a night. The end comes insidiously. A single doctrine of the system grows dim; the people can not give a reason for their faith in it; a phosphorescent skepticism throws odium upon it; fellowship with unbelievers in it becomes an open question, and then the end of it is not far off. Yet it is more than the end of that doctrine. The faith we hold is a *system.* No mind can self-consistently, and no thoughtful mind will, surrender one element of it without putting in pawn its faith in all the rest.

Do we not see signs of such theological degeneracy in our own times? Is not the *taste* for theological inquiry declining in our churches? Thirty years ago I once heard the pastor of a church in Boston say that there were laymen in his church who had read more theology than he had. Are there such laymen in any church in Boston now? Who of our laymen now store their libraries with the standards of theological science? Who, outside of the clergy, reads now the works of President Edwards? Yet I have in my library a copy of those works, well worn by the thoughtful and devout study of the senior deacon of the Pine-street Church of Boston in 1845. His sabbath recreation he used to find in reading Edwards on "God's End in Creation."

I may be wrong (I surely do not mean to croak); but, to my view, one of the most formidable signs

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of a decline of theological taste among us is this clamor of the people for sermons of thirty minutes, and their chuckling with delight, like children ten years of age, if the complaisant preacher is content with twenty. Yet they are not so far wrong as he is. A preacher whose subjects and trains of thought *can be* commonly discussed in twenty minutes gets all that he deserves if he be tolerated so long as that.

3. One other peril follows, as a matter of course. It is that our Congregational churches will deteriorate in character by a radical change of stock. From their beginning, these churches have appealed to the most thoughtful classes of the people. They have been built up from a thinking stock. We have always demanded an educated clergy in our pulpits. We have esteemed as above all price a high-toned theological literature. Wherever New-England Congregationalism goes, one of the first signs of its existence is a college. We build colleges before we build bridges.

Hence our denominational strength is in our pulpits. Our forms of worship are needlessly and perilously bare. Our ministry are not a priesthood, and our communion-tables are not altars. Our architectural taste is not fascinating. Our antiquity is nothing burdensome. Our strength is in our pulpits, or nowhere. In this respect we but represent the stalwart character of our theology. It is yet to be proved that we can change our record in these things, without alienating from

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us the thoughtful and conservative classes, on whose support Congregationalism has lived, and whose religious sympathies it represents. It is a dangerous experiment to tamper with the old stock.

Specially is any thing a peril to us which undermines our pulpit. Ours must be a reasoning pulpit. It must penetrate things, prove things, build deep, and build high. To do this, it must discuss great themes in great ways. It must handle strong doctrines, elemental truths, the landmarks of Christian thought, which centuries have elaborated. It can never live on evangelistic labors, nor on what is now understood by "revival-preaching."

That is a far-reaching and may be a fatal error, therefore, which would stifle our preachers by the gag of fifteen minutes, or throttle them with the garotte of the half-hour. The danger is, that the result will be to hand over to wiser builders the *natural stock* of Congregational churches, and leave us to — the east wind.

We will not, then, say, as the Rev. Thomas H. Skinner, D.D., of New York used to say, and as *he* could afford to say, "If my people will not hear me an hour, they may stay away." But we beg our thoughtful laymen, who can and who ought to give character to the public taste in this thing, that they will reconsider their apparent verdict thus far expressed.

Encourage a *thinking* ministry. Cultivate stu-

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dious hearing. Welcome doctrinal discussions. And, that these things may be done, give the preachers *time* to say their best wisdom, their richest experience, their profoundest teachings of the Holy Spirit. Do not make the tastes of your little children the rule of your pulpits. Are ye not *men?*

A *good* sermon is worth a hearing of three-quarters of an hour: that will do for the general average. But for the *best* sermons, on the most profound of themes, give us the full hour. We are but men. We can not preach by telegraph. The lightning does not play upon our tongue. Some of us are slow of speech. The bees did not drop honey on our lips in our cradles. Bear with our infirmity, and do not double it by requiring of us what apostles never did, and could not have done if they would.

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XIV.

THE CALVINISTIC THEORY OF PREACHING.

THERE is something sublime in the audacity with which a certain class of journalists insist upon the decadence of that type of theology which has for three centuries been dominant in the religious thought of Christendom. When an eminent teacher of that theology retires from his professional chair, to gather up the fruits of forty years in which he has reconstructed the forms of the old faith, giving to it improved statements and definitions, and adding unequaled brilliancy to its defenses, he is politely bowed out of sight by the fling that his is a defunct belief. It is not only obsolescent, but obsolete. It is dead, dead, dead, never to be revived in the religious thinking of the world. One erudite critic even goes so far as to affirm that the reason for the learned professor's retirement is that the theology he has taught is dead. Not the secret reason only, held in mortified silence, but the avowed and official reason, as the critic will have it, is, that the theology of the venerable teacher is dead. He retires with melancholy confession of a wasted life. His

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life's work can no more be tolerated by a disgusted and indignant world. Like the superintendent of a bankrupt factory, he is dismissed as one whose services are no longer wanted.

Well, so be it, if so it must be. Learned professors can take care of themselves. But, before bidding a long farewell to this faith of our fathers, it is worth while to give one backward look upon it, for the sake of seeing what it has been and has done for the generations it has held in bondage.

One representation of it is found in the Calvinistic pulpit of some half-score of religious denominations. Indeed, in one aspect of it, its most brilliant history is in the pulpit. Our greatest theologians have, as a rule, been our greatest preachers. The distinctive glory of their faith is that it *can* be preached. It has given to the Church an ideal of Christian preaching which is unique. That ideal is built on strong thought from biblical resources. It has created the most solidly intellectual and biblical pulpit known in Christian history. The ablest clergy of the world have preached this "defunct" theology. Literature has received from them almost all the literary standards which have had their origin in the pulpit. Everywhere their pulpit has found affinities with the most intellectual elements in Christian communities. It has commanded the docile hearing of a larger proportion of *men* than any other, and has held them in reverent attendance on public worship in ages of unbelief. It has at-

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tracted more powerfully than any other, men of the liberal professions. Senator Hoar has but recently acknowledged the obligations of the bar to the training of the pulpit. And it needs hardly to be said, that the pulpit which has trained the leading minds in the history of the American bar has been chiefly the Calvinistic pulpit. Under various denominational titles, the Calvinistic ideal of preaching has been the one from which the most eminent jurists of our land have derived inspiration. From Samuel Adams downward, they have learned from the pulpit how to reason upon the most profound problems and principles of civil government. From discussions of the divine government they have learned what human government ought to be. Even Thomas Jefferson confessed that his first clear conception of a republic came from the polity of an obscure Baptist church in Virginia.

That large class of minds, also, from the middle ranks of society, which represents the culture of mind as distinct from the culture of manners, has come under the teaching of the Calvinistic pulpit more largely than under that of any other. Our pulpit has met the demand of thinking men for a thinking clergy, for preachers who are at home in libraries. It has created preachers who could stand the draft which the pulpit makes on a permanent ministry. Service of forty and fifty years has not exhausted their resources. In the most powerful religious awa-

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kenings of the recent ages this style of preaching has held in hand the emotive surges of large audiences, and kept them safe from fanatical vagaries, as no other theory of preaching has done or could have done. In the most cultivated periods of history, and the most agitated periods, in which men have run wild with unbelief, it has commanded the conservative forces of society. Thus it has furnished solid bottom on which to anchor popular inquiry. Centuries of discussion have accumulated improvements which the ruder forms of its faith needed. Thus improved and rounded, that faith lives to-day, the most virile representative of Christian thought which the world contains, in the form of popular belief. It is pre-eminently the people's faith. They believe it. Their hearts respond to it. So far as any thing of human origin can receive the divine sanction in history, this high-toned intellectual ideal of a Christian pulpit has received it. It speaks for itself in no uncertain strains. A century of retrograde movement and consequent disaster could not blot out the record of what it has been and has done for the redemption of mankind. Die it may, if die it must; but, as Daniel Webster said of the heroic age of our Republic, "the past at least is secure."

To cull but a few illustrious names here and there from the roll of this Calvinistic ministry, mark the pulpit of Calvin himself at Geneva, that of John Knox in Glasgow, that of Dr. South in

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London, that of Chalmers in Edinburgh, and of his successor, Dr. Candlish, that of Edwards in Northampton, that of Hopkins in Newport, that of Davies in Virginia, those of Spring and Alexander in New York, that of Albert Barnes in Philadelphia, those of Dr. Griffin and Dr. Beecher in Boston, and that of President Finney in Oberlin. These pulpits have passed into history. They were filled by men of the Pauline stamp of intellectual coin. The majority of them were productive of profound religious awakenings, which, but for them, would have run into maelstroms of fanaticism. They created, and, what is more, controlled such awakenings in the interest of a thoughtful piety. This they did by their union of a rousing eloquence with a solid thinking power. They illustrate magnificently the practicability of uniting great hearts with great intellects, deep feeling with deep thinking, intellectual conquest with the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Such commingling of elements in the world's leaders constitutes the power which God honors in great crises of history. In the stillness of its working he makes his voice heard.

Are such pulpits dying out of the world's thought? Is the faith they have taught decadent? Is the system of agencies which they have transmitted to thousands of living pulpits sinking into popular contempt? Where are the signs of it? They vary in vital vigor: sometimes for a decade they will seem less powerful than before.

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No great system of agencies is always equal to its history. But, *all* things considered, we do not see in the Calvinistic pulpits of America any *pervasive* signs of decay, such as must be seen when the life-blood of the faith they teach runs low to the death. Somehow these pulpits still gather under their sway docile and believing audiences every Lord's Day, in numbers unequaled by any other weekly gatherings at the bidding of the same voice. What other social forces are taking the place of these? What other names of popular repute are supplanting those which this Calvinistic pulpit has made venerable in our history? It requires but very few words from unbelieving lips to consign verbally to oblivion a great truth, a great book, a great system, a great man; but to sweep out of being the work which these have done in the world, — that is a different affair.

Early in the autumn I have heard three or four crickets under the hearthstone serenading each other in voices sharp and shrill, which seemed as if they were a thousand strong. They made the whole house ring. But the solid earth moved on its way, the autumn passed into winter, the crickets died, and were no more heard. Such a passing racket are the harpings of a few skeptical minds upon this everlasting claim that our faith is defunct, our theology obsolete, our pulpit dead. As to any real force in these flings at the old theology, either in giving it its death-blow or expressing its history, they remind me of Robert Southey's

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answer to a flippant critic, who declared that "The Edinburgh Review" had crushed Wordsworth's "Excursion." "Crush the Excursion!" said the brother-poet, pointing up to the mountain back of Wordsworth's home: "you might as well try to crush Skiddaw!" So say we to these dapper critics of the theology and of the pulpit which are built into our history: "as easily crush Skiddaw!" Yes, "the strength of the hills is *His* also."

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XV.

THE THEOLOGY OF "THE MARBLE FAUN."

THIS masterpiece of Hawthorne presents a marvelous picture of the Christian theology on the nature of sin, and its workings in the human soul. An epitome of the story, familiar as it is, is necessary to illustrate the point in question.

Miriam, a passionate young artist, is betrothed in her youth to a man who becomes a monster in iniquity. She flees to Rome to escape the bondage, but not without incurring suspicion of her own innocence. There she hopes to outlive and bury the past, which hangs like a pall over her memory and her character. Her hated paramour, if such he was, finds his way also to Rome, and suddenly confronts her in her rambles in the Catacombs, as a monk. He persecutes her with his marital claims and threats of exposure. Meanwhile, she has made the acquaintance of Hilda, a singularly pure and high-souled sister-artist, and of Donatello, a young Italian who is the personification of infantile joyousness and moral weakness. Between him and Miriam there springs up the inevitable love-tie of romance.

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At length it is the fate of those two to encounter the wretch, who dogs the steps of the unfortunate girl, on the brow of the old Tarpeian Rock. There the tragedy of the story is perpetrated. Donatello, in a paroxysm of jealous rage, springs upon him, throttles him, and lifts him over the edge of the precipice. Just then, casting his eyes around inquiringly, he catches Miriam's answering *look* of approval, and he dashes the lost man to the bottom, where he lies a mangled corpse. Her friend Hilda, at a little distance, hears the muffled sound of struggle, and, turning, reads with her keen artistic sense that fatal *look* in the face of Miriam. The deed is done, witnessed by the shocked eye of innocence, and the friends go on their way.

Out of these materials, and others of secondary meaning, is wrought a most vivid reproduction of the biblical doctrine of sin as an *experience* flaming in human souls. Among a multitude of points in which a Christian reader detects the resemblance, the following are the most vivid: —

1. *The spiritual and subtle nature of sin.* A single look of the eye was all of Miriam's participation in the deed; yet when it is done, and the blackness of it begins to cloud over the lost innocence of Donatello, he says, "'I did what your *eyes* bade me do, when I asked them with mine, as I held the wretch over the precipice.' These last words struck Miriam like a bullet. Could it be so? Had her eyes assented to the deed? She

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had not known it. But alas! looking back into the turmoil and frenzy of the scene just acted, she could not deny — she was not sure whether it might be so or no — that a wild joy had flamed up in her heart when she beheld her persecutor in mortal peril. Was it horror, or ecstasy, or both in one? Be the emotion what it might, it had blazed up more madly when Donatello flung his victim off the cliff, and more and more while his shriek went quivering downward. With the dead thump on the stones below had come an unutterable horror.

"'And my eyes bade you do it,' repeated she. 'Yes, you have killed him, Donatello! He is quite dead, stone dead! Would I were so too! Yes, Donatello, you speak the truth. My *heart* consented to what you did. *We two* slew yonder wretch.'"

2. With equal vividness he paints the *despair of unpardonable guilt.*

Says Miriam to Donatello, "'You are shaking as with the cold fit of a Roman fever.'

"'Yes,'" says Donatello, "'my heart shivers.'

"'My sweet friend, what can I say to comfort you?'

"'Nothing. Nothing will ever comfort me. I have a great weight *here.* Happy? Ah, never again — never again! Ah, that terrible face — do you call that unreal?'"

Again, after years of unavailing remorse, the horror-stricken man thus pictures to an unsuspect-

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ing stranger the scene of a death by being flung off a precipice. "'Imagine a fellow-creature, breathing now and looking you in the face, and now tumbling down, down, down, with a long shriek wavering after him all the way. He does not leave his life in the air. No; but it stays in him till he thumps against the stones. Then he lies there, frightfully quiet, a dead heap of bruised flesh and broken bones! A quiver runs through the crushed mass, and no more movement after that — no, not if you would give your life to make him stir a finger. Ah! terrible, terrible! Yes, I would fain fling myself down for the very dread of it; that I might endure it once for all, and dream of it no more.'"

3. There is a profound insight into the experience of real life in the author's picture of the *recoil of guilt from the services of religion.*

Speaking of the monster monk, he writes, "There was something in this man's memory which made it awful for him to think of prayer. Nor would any torture be more intolerable than to be reminded of such divine comfort and succor as await pious souls merely for the asking. The torment was perhaps the token of a temperament deeply susceptible of religious impressions, but which had been wronged, violated, and debased, till at length it was capable only of terror from the sources that were intended for our purest and loftiest consolation."

4. One can not but think of the day of judg-

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ment in reading Hawthorne's conception of the *inevitable exclusion of the guilty from the innocent.* Miriam, reflecting on the change which crime had wrought in her relations to her friend Hilda, feels in her soul the unnaturalness of a friendship between such angelic innocence as Hilda's and such guilt as her own. She soliloquizes, "'I will never permit her sweet touch again. My lips, my hand, shall never meet Hilda's more.'" Soon they stand face to face. "Miriam at once felt a great chasm opening between them two. They might gaze at one another from the opposite side, but without the possibility of ever meeting more; or at least, since the chasm could never be bridged over, they must tread the whole round of eternity, to meet on the other side. There was even a terror in the thought of their meeting again. It was as if Hilda and Miriam were dead, and could no longer hold intercourse without violating a spiritual law. 'Hilda, your very look seems to put me beyond the limits of human kind.'"

5. With the same terrible truthfulness to life, he represents the *overwhelming recoil of innocence from guilt.* Hilda, on meeting Miriam, puts out her hand with an involuntary repellent gesture. When Miriam, forgetful of her resolutions, pleads with her by the sacredness of their common womanhood, to befriend her as if her guilt were nought, Hilda exclaims, "'Do not bewilder me thus, Miriam. If I were one of God's angels, with a nature incapable of stain, and garments that could never

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be spotted, I would keep ever at your side, and try to lead you upward. But I am a poor, lonely girl, whom God has set here in an evil world, and given her only a white robe, and bid her wear it back to him as white as when she put it on. Your powerful magnetism would be too much for me. Therefore, Miriam, before it is too late, I mean to put faith in this awful heart-quake, which warns me henceforth to avoid you. God forgive me if I have said a needlessly cruel word.'"

6. Inspired thought is scarcely more real in declaring the *curse of the very knowledge of sin to innocent beings.* Says Hilda, "'It is very dreadful! Ah, now I understand how the sins of generations past have created an atmosphere of sin for those that follow. While there is a single guilty person in the universe, each innocent one must feel his innocence tortured by that guilt. Your deed, Miriam, has darkened the whole sky. Every crime destroys more Edens than our own.'"

7. The novelist becomes more truthful than the painter in portraying the *terrific nature of conflict with sin.* Miriam, reasoning from her own deathly consciousness of the evil of sin, thus criticises Guido's painting of Michael and the Dragon: "'The archangel now, how fair he looks, with his unruffled wings, with his unhacked sword, and that exquisitely fitting sky-blue tunic, cut in the latest paradisiacal mode! What a dainty air of the first celestial society! With what half-scornful delicacy he sets his prettily sandaled foot on the head of his prostrate foe!

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"'But is it thus that Virtue looks the moment after his death-struggle with Evil? No, no! I could have told Guido better. A full third of the archangel's feathers should have been torn from his wings, the rest all ruffled till they looked like Satan's own. His sword should be streaming with blood, perhaps broken halfway to the hilt. His armor crushed, his robes rent, his breast gory, a bleeding gash on his brow, cutting right across the stern scowl of battle. He should press his foot hard down upon the old serpent, as if his very soul depended on it; feeling him squirm mightily, and doubting whether the battle were half over yet, and how the victory might turn. The battle was never such a child's play as Guido's dapper archangel seems to have found it.'"

8. Milton's conception of the horrible affinity between sin and death is recalled by Hawthorne's conception of the *loathsome brotherhood of sin.* Over against the solitude of sin, in its seclusion from innocence, lies the equally truthful fact of the fraternity of all guilty beings with each other. "Their deed had wreathed itself, as she had said, like a serpent, in inextricable links, about both their souls, and drew them into one by its terrible contractile power. It was closer than a marriage-bond."

"'O friend!' cried Miriam, 'are you conscious, as I am, of this companionship that knits our heart-strings together?'

"'I feel it, Miriam: we draw one breath, we live one life. Cemented with his blood.'

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"The young man started at the word which he himself had spoken. It may be that it brought home to the simplicity of his imagination what he had not before dreamed of, — the ever increasing loathsomeness of a union that consists in guilt, cemented with blood, which would corrupt and grow more noisome for ever and for ever, but bind them none the less strictly for that.

"They turned aside for the sake of treading loftily past the old site of Pompey's forum.

"'There was a great deed done here,' she said, — "a deed of blood like ours. Who knows but we may meet the high and ever sad fraternity of Cæsar's murderers?'

"'Are they our brethren now?' said Donatello.

"'Yes, all of them,' said Miriam, 'and many another, whom the world little dreams of, has been made our brother and our sister by what we have done within this hour.'

"At the thought she shivered. Was it true, that whatever hand had a blood-stain on it, or had poured out poison, or strangled a babe at its birth, or clutched a grandsire's throat, he sleeping, and robbed him of his few last breaths, had now the right to offer itself in fellowship with their two hands? Too certainly that right existed. It is a terrible thought that an individual wrong-doing melts into the great mass of human crime, and makes us — who dreamed only of our own little separate sin — *makes us guilty of the whole!* Thus Miriam and her lover were not an insulated pair,

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but members of an innumerable confraternity of guilty ones, all shuddering at each other."

These are but few of the master-touches with which genius pictures sin, as disclosed in the experience of human souls. Dramatic tragedy, from Æschylus to Shakspeare, employs the same solemn problems of destiny and decree which give to the Calvinistic theology its deathless sway over the human mind. Dr. Holmes, in the story of "Elsie Venner," finds it necessary to the truthfulness of fiction to interweave unmistakable hints of the old doctrine of "original sin," or, as we prefer to call it, of "inherited depravity," in all its fearfulness. Not otherwise can genius keep literature true to the facts of life. So Hawthorne, in "The Marble Faun," with no theological intent, but aiming only to paint the real life of guilt, as seen and felt in the depths of souls, puts on the canvas with like vividness the biblical and Calvinistic idea of the nature of sin and its wrathful workings. George Eliot, in "Middlemarch," does the same, and the firmament of criticism is ablaze with admiration.

Such, then, is sin, as genius finds it in the living world of men and women. Is it a reality, or a dream? If a reality, then is it a dream that sin deserves the eternal anger of God, and that the human conscience is commissioned of God to say that? If a reality, then is it a dream that undying guilt must become an "undying worm"? If a reality, then is it a dream that sin needs for its

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extinction in the soul the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost? If a reality, then is it a dream that sin needs for its forgiveness an atonement by the eternal Son of God? If a reality, then is that whole system a dream which men have denounced as the "Blood Theology"? Great truths stand or fall together. The whole Calvinistic system starts with, and is built on, the facts of sin. What that is, and how that works, give character to all the rest. Which of us, then, are the waking ones, and which the dreamers?

Hawthorne stands confessedly at the head of our American literature as an original painter of real life. The most accomplished of American critics, one whose word gives law to our literary judgments, ranks Hawthorne's name among the first five on the roll of the whole literature of our language. Which horn of the dilemma, then, shall we be tossed on? Is the biblical notion of sin which genius finds deep in the experience of souls, and paints in such lines of lurid fire, the true one? Or is genius itself a liar, and its work a cheat for fools to be scared at, and for wise men to laugh at? Which shall it be?

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XVI.

THE DEBT OF THE NATION TO NEW ENGLAND.

It is comparatively well known that M. De Tocqueville, in his study of the philosophy of our government, found, as he judged, the germinal idea of the whole structure in the town-meeting of New England. He pronounced it the corner-stone of our liberties. That principle of the democratic town-meeting dates back to the very infancy of the New-England Colonies. It was the first experiment of common sense to organize government for the common weal.

It is not so generally known that the country owes to New England another principle, quite as vital as that of the town-meeting, and which has become a part of the organic law of the Federal Government, and of every State Government in the Union. It is the principle of the *duality* of our system of legislation. The plan of committing legislative authority to two bodies, instead of one, each co-ordinate with the other, and each having the power of veto over the other, is, in the American form of it, of American origin. The English houses of Lords and Commons are not

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parallel, because one represents hereditary authority, and neither is fully representative of popular choice. We have extended over the whole land a network of dual legislation, emanating from the popular will. The principle is a most profound one in theory, and vital to national existence in its working. More than one republic has perished for the want of it. More than once has the conservative balance which it creates saved our own government from anarchy in crises of peril. It creates a movable weight which can be thrown into either scale, — that of Democracy, or that of Federalism; that of popular rights, or that of central power, — as the exigency of the time may require. Many times, probably, has the national Senate saved the country from demagogism in the House of Representatives. It was believed by wise men at Washington, in the time of President Polk, that we should have had war with England, over the north-western boundary, but for the conservative check of the Senate upon the hot legislation of the House. Through all the great North-western States the war-cry ran like a prairie-fire: "Fifty-four, forty — or fight!"

This principle of duality, like that of the town-meeting, dates also far back to the very birthday of government in colonial history. The occasion which gave rise to it would appear, but for the gravity of the results, comically diminutive. "There fell out a great business," writes Gov. Winthrop, "upon a very small occasion." It il-

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lustrates signally the ways of Divine Providence in using small things for great issues, and things despised, for ends to be held in honor through all time. A very striking feature in the character of the Puritans was their quickness to accept the divine interpretation of small things. No man was more far-sighted in this respect than Gov. Winthrop. His was the guiding hand which led the colonists to the adoption of the dual government. Yet it had so lowly an origin as a succession of pettifogging lawsuits and churchly investigations about the ownership of a stray pig.

The story runs thus: one widow Sherman lost a valuable sow in Boston, which found its way upon the premises of a Capt. Keayne. The captain was a man of property and social standing, but in somewhat ill repute as a hard man in his dealings. He summoned the town-crier to cry the pig in what is now the thronged thoroughfare of Boston commerce. The town-crier cried the pig in vain. No claimant appeared for nearly a year. Meanwhile the captain, as he affirmed, slaughtered a pig of his own, which had been domiciled with the stray sow. By and by the widow Sherman came to see the stray one. But the tests of the personal identity of swine are not very sure; the General Court had not passed judgment upon them, and the widow was puzzled. Pigs have a way of marvelous change in a few months of growth. She could not swear to the countenance of the runaway as the one which she

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had known in its infancy. That which had been "a thing of beauty" was such no more. The conscientious widow would not take oath that it was her lost pet. But the captain could not lay claim to more than one pig; and she hit upon a second thought which was ingenious, if not ingenuous. She declared, through some clairvoyant intuition of her own, that the captain's slaughtered pig, which she had never seen, was hers. She professed to believe that the butcher had "stuck" the wrong victim.

Things were becoming mixed. The dispute was brought, after the manner of those times, before the reverend elders of the First Church of Boston for adjudication. Each party appeared, and told his or her own story. The elders, after due deliberation, decided that the widow's claim was "not proven," and advised her to go about her household cares. The captain was exonerated, and the happy possessor of two pigs, or their equivalent, one of which was confessedly not his. When was ever the owner of lost pig content under such conditions? Widow Sherman at any rate was not to be thus appeased. She brought her case to trial before a jury. But they agreed with the elders, and, moreover, were so ungallant as to vote three pounds damages to the captain, "to pay his costs." Thus encouraged, he turned upon the widow with a suit for defamation of character; she having, in the greatness of her wrath, come down upon him with the charge of

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theft. "He stole the pig, and away he ran," said she. She was worsted in the second suit. The plaintiff recovered damages to the tune of forty pounds, — a sum, perhaps, not much less in value than five hundred dollars of our liquid currency. When did suitor for the recovery of a stolen pig sit down content under such injustice? She appealed to the Great and General Court. Things were becoming interesting. Five hundred dollars for a runaway sow, and the honorable Legislature of Massachusetts for a court of final appeal!

This brings the story to its more dignified chapters. Up to that time the Legislature was a single body, consisting of the magistrates, who, by official rank, constituted a class by themselves, and the deputies, who were the chosen representatives of the people; but both sat together in one chamber, and voted as one body. The illustrious pig gave occasion to a grave division of opinion. Capt. Keayne was, for the times, a rich man. Mrs. Sherman was comparatively poor, and a widow withal. The local prejudices against the captain as a hard man came into play also. The irrepressible conflict between the rich and the poor raged through the Colony, and aggravated the causes of dissension. The majority of the magistrates sided with the captain, and the majority of the deputies with the widow, seven not voting. If a full vote could have been had, the widow would have had the best of it.

Under these conditions the magistrates, as they

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had the legal right to do, interposed their negative upon further proceedings; so that the case as it stood legally was "not determined." But this left the uncomforted widow under the mulct imposed by the jury, — of forty pounds to be paid to the exultant captain. He had the equivalent of two pigs besides, and the widow none. "Much contention and earnestness there was," writes the calm, conservative governor, and well there might be. The losing party, involving through sympathy, by this time, a very respectable following of the widow, charged that the poor had been oppressed out of deference to the rich. Many "spoke unreverently of the court." Especially did the magistrates come in for their full share of opprobrium, because it was their negative which had left the widow under damages in her suit. It was charged that they had "turned aside the poor in the gate." Seven days were consumed in debate, and the case came again before the elders of the church, who found no relief for widow Sherman, but sustained the magistrates in their negative. It was an obvious case of conflict between the clear-headed intelligence on the one side and the heated sympathies and prejudices of the people on the other.

The consequence was, that all parties began to revise their opinions as to the fundamental structure of the Legislature, especially as it concerned the relations of the two classes in it to each other. Gov. Winthrop, whose remarkable wisdom piloted

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the infant Colony through graver troubles than this, interposed his private counsel to Capt. Keayne, and persuaded him to return to widow Sherman a part of the forty pounds which she had paid him under stress of law. With this she was compelled to be content, and the famous pig retired from the history of the world. Not so, however, the grave question which had been started about the construction of the legislative body. The people saw, or thought they saw, that the negative of the magistrates gave to a few individuals a power dangerous to Republican liberty. Gov. Winthrop saw the gravity of the issue, and improved wisely the opportunity to bring about a change in the organic law of legislative authority. He procured a reference of the question to the reverend elders for advice to the next General Court. This was a ruse to gain time, "that so the people's heat might be abated; for then he knew that they would hear reason." Time passed on, the "people's heat" was abated; and when the court assembled, and heard the report of the elders, the people "did hear reason." Before the court adjourned, the upshot of the matter was, that two legislative bodies were organized, — the magistrates on the one side, and the deputies on the other. To each was assigned a chamber of its own. Each received the power of negative over the action of the other; that is, the action of two bodies was made necessary to legal legislation. That was the beginning of our

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present State Senate and House of Representatives. It was the first experiment of dual legislation on this continent.

More than a century later, in the great debates on the formation of the Federal Union, John Adams took a leaf from the early history of Massachusetts. He defended the dual principle of legislation against the reasonings of Turgot, which were advanced and approved by Dr. Franklin. Adams was successful. He secured the introduction of the principle into the organic law of the United-States government, from thence it has been extended to every one of these States in the structure of its State Legislature. "Tall oaks from little acorns grow." The loss of a screw-driver delayed the arrival of a part of Gen. Pakenham's artillery at the battle of New Orleans in 1814, and in consequence he lost the battle and his life. A greater issue was impending in the loss of widow Sherman's pig. A secret providence guided the actors in this episode of colonial history, till their diminutive plans encompassed the liberties of a nation. It is not the first time that God has employed the pig-headedness of both man and beast to bring about incalculable designs of his own.

The story illustrates, also, another principle in the ways of God. It is, that the costs of great things to the instruments employed are to be estimated, not in view of the littleness of causes and occasions, but in view of the magnitude of results. It seems ludicrously disproportionate, that a stray

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pig should convulse a colony of grave and earnest men who were here for a great destiny. It makes one laugh at dignified governors and sedate deputies, and reverend divines, to see them contending for months, and debating seven days at a stretch, and interspersing solemn prayer, to settle a petty quarrel of the farmyard. Had they crossed the ocean, and braved the wilderness and the savage, for no better business than this? But turn the story end for end. Read it backward. Look at the immensity of the results to come from it. See a great nation set upon the trail of a grand political discovery; the evolution of a principle which was to consolidate a nation's freedom; fifty sovereign States awaiting, before coming to their birth, their security from anarchic revolutions; a federal union to be made possible over a continent which was to become the home of unborn millions; and all the glowing possibilities of good to the tribes of the whole earth contingent on the success of one!

Under that law of providence by which great good always involves great costs, it was fitting that such results as these should come about with costs of vexation and struggle, and great ado, to the actors and instruments stationed back at the beginning of things. It was becoming that grave legislators should sit in troubled conclave, and that reverend ministers should join in solemn prayer, and that the whole body politic should be stirred up in wrathful debate, when such a grand

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morning was about to dawn on the world. So is it with all the more fearful costs of great things in toil and suffering, and throes of death. They are to be estimated by the magnitude of God's ends, not by the pettiness of man's beginnings. We have asked in dumb horror for the reason why one bullet, from the hand of the one most despicable of mankind, should be permitted to end a great life in agony, and plunge a nation into grief. Wait and watch. The end is not yet. We shall by and by see some good coming from the event which shall be commensurate with such cost; some great blessing gained, or some great tragedy escaped, which shall seem to be worth even the loss of such a life by such a death. There never was and never will be an hour of wasted suffering in this world.

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XVII.

OUGHT THE PULPIT TO IGNORE SPIRITUALISM?

No, and for the following reasons; viz., —

1. It is an extensive and still growing delusion. This is not so obvious in Eastern cities as in the country towns and at the West. Up among the hills of New Hampshire and Vermont, and in the interior counties of Maine, it is found sometimes in such strength as to be a very positive drawback to churchly influence and the growth of general culture. Where the resources of social excitement are few, the home of a clairvoyant often attracts more interest than the lyceum lecture or the sermon. Where churches are declining through decrease of population, there spiritualism is often rife. It seems to be german both to a decaying and an unorganized state of society. Wherever, for any reason, more healthy causes of excitement do not exist, this diseased and effeminate development of popular credulity takes their place. Home missionaries find it one of the most insolent forms of infidelity in the North-western States and on the frontiers of civilization. In some towns it claims to be the only form of religious faith that

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has organic life. Wherever French and German communism takes root, the same soil gives nutriment to this opposite, but not contrary, supernaturalism. The old story is often repeated in coalitions of opposite schools of infidelity against the church of Christ, — Herod and Pilate are made friends together.

True, the claims of spiritualists as to the growth of the sect must be taken with large allowance. They have a comfortable way of laying claim to all those who admit the historic reality of the phenomena on which their faith is founded, and even all who inquire into them for the entertainment of idle hours. Thus, Gen. Banks, the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas, President Lincoln, Lord Brougham, Queen Victoria, Napoleon III., and, as one spiritualist expressed it, "half the crowned heads in Europe," have been claimed as "believers." Dr. Nichols of Haverhill understands them to claim three millions in this country and six millions in Europe. Nine millions for a sect which has yet to celebrate its first semi-centennial! Where is Gen. Walker of the Census Bureau? Such elasticity of reckoning is of course preposterous. But, making heavy deductions from it, the residuum is still painfully large. A single fact gives, perhaps, the most accurate hint of the reality: it is, that the leading organ of the sect in this country is said to have a circulation of a hundred thousand copies; and, so far as I know, the claim is not disputed.

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2. It is a seductive form of error to several classes of minds in all communities. Idle minds — an increasing class in prosperous times — find in it entertainment when time hangs heavy. Those who are fond of the marvelous, and who crave a glimpse of the unseen world, find a feast at the spiritualistic *séance*. The same causes which lead the ignorant, and many, also, who would resent that epithet, to the gypsy-camp or the hut of an Indian fortune-teller, give to the clairvoyant phenomena a lurid interest which captivates many, to their lifelong hurt. The naturally credulous and superstitious are a large proportion of any community. Those who have been bereaved of friends, also, in their mental weakness welcome any thing that promises to them communion with the departed. It is marvelous on what scanty evidence these will yield tearful faith to the revelations of the spiritualistic seer. Proof on which they would not risk the ownership of a horse is accepted as adequate evidence that the world of spirits is wide open to their gaze, and even that they join hands again consciously and palpably with the loved and lost.

The fact deserves notice, also, that, in modern and Western nations, this depraved type of supernaturalism is almost all that Christian civilization has left intact that can take the place of Oriental magic and European astrology in ministering to certain tastes which are deep-seated and permanent in human nature. The old allurements to

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those tastes have disappeared; but the tastes themselves remain, and will have something to feed upon. In all the past ages they have disclosed a grim tendency to demonism, even to the extreme of devil-worship. Why should we not expect them to thrive upon the food which spiritualism generates, specially in its swampy and malarial low grounds?

Another large class whom this error allures consists of those who have long starved their moral sensibilities by one form or another of religious negations. These often spring, with a rebound, to any form of supernaturalism which the age furnishes. The supernatural in some form the human mind will have. Human nature craves it as the normal food of its sensibilities. Those who have most stoutly resisted faith in biblical miracles, and Hebrew prophecies, and apostolic inspiration, are often the first to succumb to this modern necromancy. They sometimes mingle in a strange medley the spiritualistic vagaries with some sort of reproduction of the biblical teachings.

The late Professor Hare of the University of Pennsylvania lived through the best years of his life an atheist. Of the human soul and its immortality he used to say, "I know man: I have had him in my laboratory full grown; and I have reduced all there is of him to a *gas*. I *know* that that is all. I have the evidence of my own eyes for it. If carbonic acid gas is immortal, man is immortal." But no sooner did he carry his hide-

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ous faith to the *séance* of a "medium" than the atheism of a lifetime gave way, and he affirmed, with equal confidence, "I *know* there is another life than this: I know there is a soul which is not a gas. I have talked with my father, my mother, my sister, in another world: I have the evidence of my own ears for it." So, between the learned chemist's eyes and ears, it should seem that a change for the better, so far as it went, had taken place. But did his mind admit, in consequence of its clairvoyant enlightenment, any healthy faith in the Christian religion? Not at all. It was only the rebound of a starving mind from the grossest materialism to the grossest supernaturalism. He once grasped the electrical machine in the office of a clairvoyant, and, jerking it back and forth, angrily demanded that Jesus Christ should come in person to instruct him respecting the unseen world and his own destiny there. Even the necromancer shrunk back, appalled at the profaneness of the converted atheist. So, said one like-minded, of a former age, "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." Dr. Hare represents a class of minds whose natural but stifled cravings for the supernatural drive them to almost any and every form of it which does not lay upon them the restraints of a spiritual religion.

3. The popular faith in the supernaturalism of the Bible is passing through a transition which exposes it to special peril from such a type of error as that of spiritualism. This is saying only that

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which is known and read of all men. We live in an age of silent revolution: it is trying severely the Christian faith of many. Skepticism is trickling down through crevices, from the heights of literary and scientific culture, to the social strata below. The people who compose our churches are not so well indoctrinated as their fathers were in the fundamentals of their faith. Fewer Christian men and women than formerly can give a reason for the faith that is in them. I remember hearing the Rev. William M. Rogers, then pastor of the Central Church, Boston, say, thirty years ago, that there were men and women in his church who had read more theology than he had. Probably it was true. Could a similar statement be truthfully made now respecting that church and its pastor? Many most excellent Christians, the superiors, it may be, in some other respects, to their fathers, in this respect of theologic knowledge are living largely upon their heritage from a more stalwart age. Their faith is not so well defined as that of the fathers: it is held with vague hints of drawbacks and qualifications which are the more hurtful for their vagueness. Their shadows loom up large in the twilight.

The inspiration of the Scriptures, for example, was once held in the bald and simple form of "verbal" dictation. Whatever were the defects of that type of belief, it had this merit, — that it was definite. It was easily expressed, and easily applied; and its authority was unquestioned.

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Theological science has changed all that. But, if wiser forms of faith in inspiration have sprung up, they have not yet taken possession of the popular mind with any thing like the vigorous grasp with which the theory of verbal inspiration held the unquestioning faith of a former generation. This period of transition may end in a firmer, because a more enlightened and self-consistent, belief; but, while the transition lasts, it is a period of peril to the faith of multitudes. Many are not qualified to say wherein lies the difference between the vision of St. Paul, when he was "caught up to the third heaven," and the vision of the spiritual seer of to-day, who claims the same illumination from the same altitude. Who shall instruct the people in this thing if the pulpit does not?

4. The failure of natural science to give a prompt and thorough solution of the mysteries of spiritualism lays a special responsibility on the pulpit. Some disturbances of the popular faith may now be safely let alone, because popular science has so satisfactorily restored the broken equipoise. Science has solved whatever of mystery there was about them, and all men of average intelligence know the fact. Time was, when the faith of many trembled at the discovery that the earth is more than six thousand years old, though the Scriptures, as read for ages by the learned and ignorant alike, had declared the contrary. Philological science has joined hands with natural science in explaining that contradiction so that

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nobody's faith is disturbed by it now. But the like is not true of the phenomena of spiritualism. Nothing else in scientific history has so perplexed scientific authorities as this has done. Even the simple form of it called "planchette" has been well denominated the "despair of science." The notion of secret wires and invisible hairs, by which wise men once thought to explain these phenomena, will not do now. Men of sense know better. They know what they see with their own eyes, and hear with their own ears. To the common sense of common men, "unconscious cerebration" is not much better. "Psychic force" shares the same fate. These are but names of things which remain as profound mysteries as before. Science has only given us high-sounding titles for them. They are too ethereal to explain to the average intelligence the facts witnessed by a thousand eyes. After all the deductions from the phenomena which collusion and jugglery and electricity, and "nervous fluid," and "psychic force," and "unconscious cerebration," — even admitting these last to be more than names, — can account for, there remains a residuum which nothing accounts for on any principle of science which can be made clear to popular comprehension. Honest scientists admit this. When confronted with this residuum of unexplained mystery, they are dumb, or they say frankly, "We do not know."

This inability of science to answer popular inquiry on the subject in any way which com-

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mends itself to the common sense of men, is a fact of great significance to the pulpit. It suggests the query, Who shall give answer to the popular inquiry? As a mere matter of science, it can await the wisdom of the future; but, as a question affecting the religious faith of many, it can not wait. The people find this nondescript thing in the midst of them, and they reasonbly ask solemn questions about it. It profanely puts on the semblance of religion. Men and women are trusting to it their hopes of heaven. It tries to take them by the hand, and give them comforting words in affliction. With one hand it seems to lay hold on the nether world, and to let loose vapors that smell of fire and brimstone; and with the other it seems to open wide the gates of heaven, on more than "golden hinges turning." The people's faith is set agape by its vagaries. They reasonably ask, "What shall we believe? What not believe? And why?" Because science is mute, they turn to their religious teachers; and to whom else can they turn?

5. Once more: the fact that the Scriptures are *not* silent on the subject of necromancy is a fact of some significance to the pulpit. The people find in the Old Testament perplexing texts about witchcraft, about those who have "familiar spirits," about "wizards that peep and mutter." Their children read the story of the witch of Endor; and bright ones among them do not fail to recognize in the raising of Samuel an occur-

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rence very like to what they have heard around the fireside, with large eyes and bated breath, of the doings of clairvoyants; and they ask their fathers, and the fathers ask their ministers, what it all means. They want to know whether there *is* any difference between the ancient and the modern mystery. Inquiry on the subject seems to have the biblical sanction. To name the Salem witchcraft, with its uncanny associations, does not now put an end to the inquiry. Tower Hill rather complicates the matter in the modern thought.

Turning, then, to the New Testament, the people read of demoniacal possessions, and of ministering spirits, and of guardian angels, and the prophecy that in the last days there shall be signs and wonders of evil purport, which shall, if possible, deceive God's elect. They ask what these things mean, and the question is not unreasonable. When spiritualistic lecturers boldly claim that apostolic inspiration was no more than one form of clairvoyance, and that ministering spirits are departed souls from this world, and that Jesus Christ was only the Prince of mediums, the people can not say nay, and give a good reason for it.

There is, and there has been through all history, a world of the marvelous, bordering hard on the world of spirits, which the Bible does not ignore. It has somewhat to say of that world in limbo, almost from its earliest to its latest revelations. Inspiration does not retire it to the cloud-land of

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an "if," and leave it there. When people find in their homes and neighborhoods things which inevitably *remind* them of these biblical scraps of mysterious history and prophecy, and specially when they find their inherited faith in miracles and in inspiration muddled by the modern necromantic marvels, it is natural, it is reasonable, that they should ask, "What do these things mean?" And, so long as popular science says never a word, who shall give to the people the necessary satisfaction, if the pulpit does not? Has not this thing been let alone long enough? Is it not time that the clergy should have opinions about it, which, as theologians, they are willing to be responsible for, and opinions which shall commend themselves to the good sense and the biblical faith of their hearers? It can never be beneath the dignity of the pulpit to answer any inquiries touching religious faith which an honest and sensible people are moved to ask.

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XVIII.

HOW SHALL THE PULPIT TREAT SPIRITUALISM?

STARTING on the most general and assured ground of belief respecting this delusion, may not much be accomplished by simply *exposing the irreligious drift of it as seen in its own records?* Something is gained, if we can show to the satisfaction of thinking men that this thing is not *religion.* Whatever else it is, it is nothing that commends itself to the religious instincts of men. It has neither the self-consistency, nor the dignity, of a revelation from Heaven. The profaneness of many of its teachings is patent on a very brief examination of its organs. Granted that it says many true things and good, it has no more of these than a religious delusion must have to be attractive to believers.

> "Oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
> The instruments of darkness tell us truths."

Meanwhile, the vile things and false which are its practical outcome are sufficient to discredit the whole as a system of religion. God does not thus contradict himself.

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No matter what we may believe, if any thing, about the origin of these phenomena, the drift of the whole is wrong morally. This can be made obvious to the Christian conscience. As a sequence, Christian people can be convinced that they should have no part nor lot in the matter. If their Christian faith is true, spiritualism as a religion is false. The necromantic *séance*, then, is no place for a professed friend of Christ. Tampering with the thing from motives of curiosity is not only an evil, it is a sin. The curiosity itself which leads men to seek from such sources a knowledge of the invisible world, is itself a sin. The delicacy of a Christian conscience can not but be blurred by such communion. "This generation seeketh after a sign," said the Master to "a generation of vipers."

The pulpit achieves much, if it teaches this effectually. Much to the purpose is gained, if we can cut this evil adrift from Christian support. No other support of it can give it a respectable prestige among the religions of the age. Make the Church a unit against it, and it can live only as one of the religious monstrosities of the times, which, like Mormonism, do not carry weight enough to make them respectable. No body of men can long hold up in broad daylight a thing which the judgment of the Christian Church has put under ban. That thing must become offensive to the moral sense of men. It must rot.

In the days of the old antislavery controversy,

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Albert Barnes used to say to the representatives of three millions of slave-property in the broad aisle of his church, "Rid the American Church of all complicity with American slavery, and the thing is doomed." The representatives of the three millions knew it to be true, and they were silent. The principle is more forcibly true of any thing which assumes to be a revelation from Heaven, and yet from which the moral sense of the Church revolts. Christianity has gained such dominion over public sentiment, that no other *religion*, at least, can stand against it. May we not, then, preach so much as is here indicated, even without knowing much, or believing much, respecting the power which works the spiritualistic marvels?

May not still more be accomplished by a thorough re-discussion in the pulpit of *the teachings of the Bible on the subject of ancient magic?* Here is a point, I think, at which we have slipped. The popular recoil from the Salem witchcraft, and from the tragedies to which it led, and from the diathesis of the age which made those tragedies possible, has thrown us all back a long way behind the plain teachings of the Scriptures on the whole class of subjects to which this belongs. We have come to think of them as things to be put down with a laugh, or ignored with a smile of contempt. But they do not go down at such bidding. Every age resuscitates them in one form or another. So has it been from the beginning. Heathen history

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is full of them. Such is the craving of the human mind for the supernatural, that, if you laugh it out of faith in one form, it will gravely slide into another form, with only difference enough to disguise its identity. Live it will, even though it beg its way into a herd of swine.

I attribute the growth of spiritualism largely to a re-action of this kind. Tower Hill in Salem has frightened men out of their mental equipose about these things. Not content with denying false things, we have swung over to the extreme of denying every thing. We have denied facts supported by human testimony of such weight that it would send the best of us to the scaffold, if arrayed against us in a trial for murder. We have taught the world, or allowed it to be taught, that, if any thing presumes to be done by superhuman agency, that presumption stamps it as a cheat. Have we not, on this class of topics, unwittingly committed the very error which we charge upon the skeptic who affirms that a miracle is *per se* an absurdity? The natural re-action from this policy of faithlessness in the superhuman is this wretched travesty of the supernatural which spiritualism would substitute for Christianity.

What, then, shall we do to remedy the mistake? I answer, for one thing, acknowledge the mistake. Then, go back to the biblical methods of treating necromancy. Learn what those methods are, and teach them to the people. The Bible does not dismiss the heathen magic with a laugh or a sneer.

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It does not ignore the thing as too insignificant or too low for the dignity of inspiration. It does not leave it enveloped in the cloud-land of hypothesis. On the contrary, the Scriptures treat it as a fact in human history. They discuss it as a significant development of idolatry. They forbid dalliance with it as a sin. The practice of it the Mosaic law punished as a capital crime. The great religious reformations on record in the Old Testament began with ridding the land of those who dealt with familiar spirits. All down the ages, from Moses to St. Paul, the Bible thunders with denunciations of it as a form of devil-worship. When aged Christians of the last generation in the Sandwich Islands first heard of American spiritualism, they detected instantly its identity with their own former worship of evil spirits. They marveled that American Christians could tamper with it in the face of the biblical warnings against it. I repeat, therefore, teach the people the biblical treatment of necromancy. Show them the points of resemblance between its ancient and its modern forms. We may reasonably look for the same recoil of the Christian conscience from it that was witnessed in the churches of the Hawaiian Islands. Very much is gained if we can thus bring the thing under fire from the battery of biblical history.

May we not wisely advance our mine still farther and deeper under the foundations of the delusion *by resuscitating the popular faith in the biblical*

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demonology? Here, again, I must believe that we are suffering from an extreme re-action. Because our fathers, at one end of the pendulum's swing, believed that Satan was everywhere, we at the other end believe that he is nowhere. Because they attributed almost every evil thing to his agency, we attribute nothing to it. That is to say, this is the drift of popular opinion. To our fathers the Devil was a real, a personal, an imperial power. He was the sovereign of a malignant empire, which interpenetrated and put in peril all human destinies. To them sin was bondage to the Devil. They often wrote even the pronouns of which his name was the antecedent beginning with a capital. The very thought of him moved them to defensive prayer. The grand old Litany of England's saints reads, "From the crafts and the assaults of the Devil, good Lord, deliver us!" Three times does the Litany break forth into supplication against his malign enchantments. In their artless faith they prayed against malignant spirits almost in the same breath in which they sought deliverance from "battle and murder and sudden death." Then, as if it were the climax of divine blessing, they pray the Lord "*finally* to beat down Satan under our feet." In dead earnest they put their whole Saxon souls into the wrestle with the unseen adversary. Have we grown any wiser in "changing all that"? Are we nearer to the solemn teachings of God's word when we use the Devil to point an epigram, or

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raise a laugh? Because our fathers went to one extreme, if it was an extreme, are we wiser than they in going to the other? Yet is not this to a large extent the condition of the popular faith to-day? And has not the velvet theology of the pulpit in part produced it?

What is the effect of the change on the history of spiritualism? Just this: we have lost faith — an operative, living faith, I mean — in the only thing which can at present explain this modern necromancy biblically and philosophically. It finds us all dumfoundered. Restore the popular faith in the fact of a satanic kingdom on earth, and put into that faith the biblical vividness of belief, and my conviction is, that, with such a leverage as that faith would give, the popular mind would make very quick work with spiritualism, and every thing of that ilk.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not forget the conquests of science in our times over the occult things of nature. I am not unmindful of the possibility that scientists may yet explain that residuum of mystery which thus far they have simply handed over to the police, and which the police have sagely handed back again. Specially, I do not ignore that wise conservatism of faith which would fain reduce the supernatural in human affairs to the minimum. This is as it should be. And, when science advances our knowledge to the long-desired discovery, it will be our duty to welcome it, and to adjust our faith to proved

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facts. We will not cling to faith in will-o'-the-wisps, after the laboratory has manufactured phosphorus. But do we not, as religious teachers, encounter a grave difficulty, which it is our province to remedy if we can, in the fact, that, at present, science is impotent to help us to the discovery, and that the mystery does not seem to lie in the domain of physical science alone, but partly in our spiritual nature? There is *mind* in it: there is the rub. There is a certain remnant, to say the least, of necromantic intelligence, before which science is dumb. It knows no more than we do. It talks to us learnedly of "unconscious cerebration," and "psychic force," and such like things; and, when we try to put them into Saxon for the instruction of the people, they do not know what we mean. Do we ourselves know? As practical men in a practical emergency, can we afford to wait for science to relieve us by that kind of verbal wisdom?

Do we not need for present use some simple yet philosophical explanation, which shall commend itself to the common sense of men and to the biblical prepossessions of the people, even if our respect for science compels us to hold it as only a probable hypothesis? And do we not find that explanation in the plain teachings of the Bible respecting the malign realm of the "Prince of the power of the air"? We might not venture to *create* such a solution on our own authority; but finding it, as we do, ready to our hand, may we

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not use it as a tentative and probable hypothesis, till science shall extend our knowledge, if it can, to something more satisfactory? Make this kingdom of Satan a reality to the common mind, as it was two centuries ago to the ablest of the jurists and scientists of England, and then the common mind has a plain biblical response at hand, when tempted to receive the revelations of spiritualism as either an antidote or a supplement to the Christian Scriptures. The response is as philosophical as it is biblical, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

Speaking to the same purpose in detail, I would say, Vivify the people's faith in the personality of Satan. Teach them that he is a power in the universe, whom God condescends to treat as a belligerent. Bring back the conception which the fathers had of him, as the head of an aristocratic empire, supported by a multitude of subordinates and auxiliaries. Revive the ancient faith in the intimacy of their converse with the minds of men, to the extent, possibly, of demoniacal possession. The Scriptures nowhere represent that infliction — be it disease, or sin, or both — as obsolete. Make it a reality to the popular imagination, that we wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. Instruct men to fear the craft, rather than the force, of malign tempters. Picture their power to charm men with fascinating revelations. Paint them as angels fallen, beings once of light and beauty; their sovereign, Lucifer, the light-bearer, son of the morning. Re-

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produce with biblical intensity the great conflict of right with wrong in the universe, as a conflict between God and Satan. Open men's eyes to the vision of this earth as the battle-ground of invisible combatants: make them feel that the very air is tremulous with the march of spiritual battalions.

This, in fragmentary outline, is the "restoration of belief" which the people need to equip them well to meet this latest form of the old heathen magic. Intrenched in such a faith, they could not readily be beguiled by the delusion. The poisonous exotic could not take thrifty root in such a soil. Is it not for the want of such a soil in the antecedent faith of the people, that the delusion *has* taken root so widely and so disastrously? And, if so, what better thing can we do than to restore the old faith, shorn of its excrescences? What better than to lift back into place the dislocated teachings of the Bible?

With such a faith antecedently fixed, Christian men would inevitably attribute such things as spiritualism to Satanic wiles. These would appear to them to be, and would *be*, the most philosophical explanation of those phenomena, of which, as now, science and the police should confess their ignorance. If the biblical demonology is a *fact* in the divine organization of the universe, and if demoniac craft is a *fact* in the divinely permitted economy of probation, what else should seem more natural than these marvels over which science

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despairs? What else is the demoniac world more likely to be engaged in? If it *may* be that sin, matured and aged, tends to reduce the grade of guilty intellect, what else is more probable than those frivolities and platitudes which make up much of the spiritualistic revelations? On the other hand, what else than the marvels bordering on miracle, which this modern theurgy offers to gaping curiosity, are more likely to be the "signs and wonders" which in the last times are, if possible, to deceive God's elect? Are we not in danger of believing and teaching too little, rather than too much, on a theme so dismal?

We are in no danger of restoring faith in the tragedies of Tower Hill. Such things as those, once lived through in the jurisprudence of nations, are never lived over again. They must needs have been, to prepare the way for the calmer faith to follow. The worst use possible to make of them is to allow them to frighten us out of all faith. Better exhume Cotton Mather than that.

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XIX.

FOREIGN MISSIONS AND HOME MISSIONS AS SEEN BY CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY.

THE dearth of candidates for foreign missions is surely an afflictive, and, in some aspects, an alarming fact. That single statement once made on the platform of the American Board, "that in all our seminaries not one man stood pledged to their service," was the blast of a trumpet like that by which the warder of the old mediæval castle used to summon the men-at-arms to the rescue. Every man in the seminaries should heed it, and, if he does not respond in person, should be able to show cause. Why the deep and prolonged interest in the subject which almost always prevails in theological seminaries does *not* result in a large and immediate influx of candidates to the foreign service is too complicated an inquiry to be briefly answered; yet there is one fact which goes far towards an answer to it intelligibly and reasonably.

Turning to the missionary history of theological schools, we find that the revivals of the foreign missionary *esprit* commonly alternate with similar

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waves of special interest in home missions and in other departments of the home-work. I mean by this, not merely, that, when men do not go abroad, they stay at home, but that in the intervals between the awakenings to the wants of the heathen world have occurred *as* marked *revivals* of special prayer and solicitude and self-consecration for the salvation of this country. The evidences of such awakenings are such as in an ordinary church would prove the existence of a revival of interest in the conversion of the surrounding population. Call them what we may, they are upliftings of the level of Christian feeling to an unusual height, but specially concerned with the work at home more than with the work abroad.

We can not always anticipate what turn to practical life the inner spirit of a body of Christians will take. Nor can we always explain why it should take the turn it does. We may even find difficulty in vindicating its estimate of the *relative* worth of things. Still we can not wisely rebuke it, nor strive to change its drift. Still less can we bind it to the test of any one development.

There was a time when, in Germany, the spirit of evangelical revival declared itself in a special interest in the founding and support of orphan-asylums. The Orphan House at Halle, founded by Hermann Francke, was the representative, for many years, of one of the most valuable evangelical awakenings in German history. In the middle ages a literal obedience to our Lord's command.

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"Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor," was the form in which many a profound revival of religious life expressed itself. Hence, in part, arose a multitude of the hospitals, asylums, and retreats which are scattered over Europe. The Holy Spirit in man looks many ways. The "wheels" in Ezekiel's vision of the spirit of life were "full of eyes." Such is the spirit of life in the Church.

Such, in character, are genuine revivals of missionary zeal in a seminary. They are one in spirit and in power; but sometimes they drift eastward, and sometimes westward, and sometimes they do not drift at all. Now they concentrate attention upon China, India, Japan, and then upon Dakota, Oregon, California; and again, with every appearance of the same missionary consecration, the young men choose the little church in the Green Mountains, or the metropolitan pulpit, or the mission church under its shadow.

One illustration of the westward drifting of such a missionary revival is the formation at Andover of the well-known Iowa Band. In that more than Holy League eleven men allied themselves to go to that then desolate territory. Their success is some evidence that they were not mistaken in their choice. A very intelligent layman of that State has expressed the opinion, that that Band from Andover (reduced to nine before reaching the field) achieved more than any other human agency to save the whole State from infidelity.

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Later was formed the smaller but equally illustrious Kansas Band. Its members went to that State when it was in the death-struggle with slavery. Their usefulness in laying religious foundations deep and strong is immeasurable. Not only churches and Sunday schools, and the establishment of a sabbath, but colleges, libraries, the local press, the whole school system of the State, and the introduction of the same institutions into Nebraska and "the regions beyond," have felt the influence of their plastic hand. They have done their work, too, at the peril of limb and life. One of them escaped, by only the protection of a rail fence, the infamous Quantrell Massacre. Few clergymen live to-day who have so much to show for twenty years of work as those Kansas pioneers. And they have as many years more to labor before "the grasshopper" will "become a burden."

Both of those companies of Western volunteers, and scores of others of the same guild, were the very men, who, if the Lord had not directed them, as they believed, to the frontier of our own land, would have been very likely to be found to-day in the foreign service. When they went westward, great disappointment was felt that they did not go eastward. Yet who will now venture to say that they mis-heard the Master's voice? Would any one of us venture to *undo* all that they have achieved, and veto all that they give promise of achieving, in their chosen field, for the sake of

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even the magnificent work which they doubtless would have accomplished in India or Japan?

It is also specially to be remembered that the relative claims of the home and the foreign fields have not been for the last fifteen years what they were before the war. The home-work has expanded immeasurably in its practicable extent, and been intensified unspeakably in its urgency. Are we not all trembling before it to-day? Is not our priceless inheritance from our fathers trembling in the balance, for the want of a calm, scholarly, Christian leadership for the countless hosts of ignorance and depravity into whose hands we have put, not the spelling-book and the Testament, but ballots and muskets? Is not the weight of the destiny of this land often intolerable to those who feel called of God to stand under and lift it? Do we not feel impelled to *hasten* the work of redemption? Can we afford *delay?* What means the increase of the annual income of the American Missionary Association from forty thousand dollars before the war to three hundred thousand now? Does not a profound alarm among the Christians in this country express itself in this fact?

When Gen. Grant was before Petersburg, at a critical moment of the siege, his only word of command was, "Pour in the men, pour in the *men!*" So do we not all of us judge and feel, through all the broken deeps of our souls, that the only thing which can save this land for Christ

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is to pour in the *men*, and to do it *now?* West, South, North-west, South-west, the whole frontier, and strategic keys from the Lakes to the Gulf, must be carried soon, or not at all, as it seems to all human foresight.

The protection of our Lord's Day, the salvation of our youth from infidelity, the preservation of our school system, the planting of even the rudimental institutions of Christianity in the new States, the crushing of Mormonism, the uplifting of the negro from the awful slough of ignorance and corruption in which freedom has surprised him, the not less imperative need of the civilization of the Southern white men, the rescue of both races in the Southern half of the land from the clutch of Romanism, the recovery of the whole Southern conscience from the obtuseness which slavery has inflicted, the substitution of the civilization of the alphabet for that of the bowie-knife, and the christianizing of the American Chinese, — these are but the *pioneer* work of the gospel on this continent. The maturity of Christian civilization lies far away beyond them.

Does not the exigency which is upon us fairly open the question, whether a far-seeing policy does not dictate a suspension of advance in the foreign work, allowing it simply to hold its own, *if this is necessary* to the speedy achievements of certain preliminary conquests in this country? Can not the world, as a whole, better afford that China and Japan should wait twenty years longer for the

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gospel than that Nebraska, Colorado, Texas, and the Carolinas should wait? Is it not a less evil that Africa in the East should wait than that our own Africa in the South should?

Look at those pitiable colored churches! What are the elements of many of them? — consciences poisoned by fetich-worship yet lurking in the blood, corrupted by the degradations which none but a slave knows, and these made putrid by the more degrading example of the master. In how many of them are falsehood, theft, concubinage, adultery, a bar to church-membership? If rumor be true, how much above them are some of the white churches? Can we venture, is it good policy to venture, farther into the heart of heathendom, leaving such rotting monstrosities of our Christianity behind us?

The conflict is one, — fought on one field, under one strategic Mind, for one grand conquest. While the loyal forces are so few, and, relatively to the enemy, so feeble, it may not be wise policy to "advance all along the line." Said the commander of the French forces, witnessing the famous "ride upon death" of the six hundred English cavalry at Balaklava, "It is magnificent, but it is not war." So the resolve of the Christian Church to evangelize the world in this generation might be the sublime of heroism, and yet not wise. If, then, there must be a halt anywhere, does not the millennial reign require that that halt should *not* be on this Western Continent? Is there

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another country on the globe whose *immediate* evangelizing is so vital to the world's redemption as that of our own?

Far be it from me to answer these questions authoritatively. None but an infinite Mind can do that. Still less would I answer them, or ask them, to the discouragement of foreign missions. Nor is the necessity supposed, by any means to be yet conceded. But my sole object in asking these questions is to state the case fairly, as it has stated *itself* to young candidates for the ministry, specially during the last fifteen years. The question of their life's work has come before them under an alternative so complicated as to perplex the wisest, and so fearful as to appall the boldest.

To them the cause of Christ in this land seems to be in an unprecedented strait. The element of *speed* appears to be a more potent factor in the problem of its salvation than in that of any other portion of the globe. Every thing seems to depend on quick marches. The Napoleonic policy, of rapid movement of great forces to great conquests, appears to them the only one that promises ultimate success. If there is anywhere under Christian banners an Imperial Guard, which "dies, but never surrenders," but whose presence insures victory, they feel that its prestige and power are needed here. They explore the West and the South, and come back awestruck at the impending conflict. They listen to foreign missionaries and home missionaries, fresh from their

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fields of honor, side by side; and to the majority of them the home-work appears to be in the most appalling danger from delay. Results good and evil, which elsewhere will accumulate arithmetically, must here accumulate geometrically. Though inferior vastly in present numbers, this land seems to them to be "the key of the position" which must command the field. The power which holds it makes conquest of the world. To the older continents it is what the chateau of Hougomont and the farm of La Haye Sainte were to the field of Waterloo. It must be taken and held for Christ, or we must say, as Napoleon did when the Old Guard broke: "All is lost!"

Such is the outlook upon that "field" which "is the world," as these young men see it, when they ponder the question *where* to take their places in the ranks. Yet, setting aside all these facts, which plead so potently for advance quick and strong in the home-work, the secretaries of the American Home Missionary Society tell them, that for the work of that organization alone — if it should make *no* advance, but simply hold its own for twenty years to come — not less than fifty new men must be furnished every year. If the young men see in this condition of things the call of God to them, who will venture to dispute their vision? Who of us, in the face of his own life's record, will take it upon himself to say that they are deciding the question of their life's work with either a blind or a self-indulgent judgment?

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XX.

FOREIGN MISSIONS, THEIR RANGE OF APPEAL FOR MISSIONARIES LIMITED.

"We are three millions, *one-fifth* fighting men," are the words which Webster puts into the mouth of the elder Adams of Revolutionary fame. The proportion of the young men in our seminaries who *can* go into the foreign field is restricted somewhat, as is the proportion of "fighting men" in the population of a country. The two proportions are not equally low perhaps; but that of the possible foreign missionaries rarely if ever exceeds one-third of the whole number on a seminary catalogue, and often falls as low as one-fourth.

Does this seem to be a low estimate? Look at the facts. A large section of these young men are excluded from the reckoning by considerations of health. Their own health, or, as probably, that of their chosen companions for life, settles the question imperatively and adversely. The question often is not from the Board to the student, "Will you go?" but from the student to the Board, "May I go?" And the answer is, "No: the treasury can not take the risk of your infirm health."

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Another fragment, of variable size, must be struck from the list, for special infirmity in linguistic acquisition. One devoted missionary, after twenty years of service, could not preach intelligibly to the natives, and was obliged to return home. The churches ought not to afford many such experiments. Yet not all students have the "gift of tongues." If some of them should be sent abroad, some brother Aaron of whom it can be said, "I know that he can speak well in Arabic or Chinese," must be sent with each to do the preaching for him.

A further fraction must be set aside, for the possession of some rare gift or taste which has fore-ordained them to some special department of service at home. When I go into a student's room, and find him reading La Place's "Mechanique Céleste" for recreation, and discover upon his shelf a novel chronometer of his own invention and manufacture, and learn that he is the only man in Massachusetts who has calculated the date of a coming eclipse, I strongly suspect that He who created him did not intend that he should be a street-preacher in Canton, but predestined him to be a professor of natural philosophy in a Western college; and my zeal for missions is not offended by his drifting into that position for his life's work.

When the late Professor Putnam of Dartmouth College, one of the most accomplished Greek scholars of the country, stood on the platform at

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his graduation at Andover, more than one of his hearers, taking their cue from his oration, pronounced him "the young Grecian;" thus confirming the judgment of his collegiate and theological instructors, that the God of nature had made him to be a professor of the Greek language and literature. Unfortunately for the missionary aspirations of such men, the demand for professors of natural philosophy and of Greek literature among the Zulus is not oppressive.

My friend Professor Churchill will pardon me for saying, that, when his rare elocutionary and histrionic gifts developed themselves at Harvard College and in the seminary, there was but one voice among sagacious educators as to the reason of his creation. But the need of American professors of elocution among the Arabs is not overwhelming.

Only once in my life have I ventured to advise a young man to sacrifice a remarkable natural genius for mechanical invention to a study for the ministry. Unfortunately, he followed my counsel. His glib tongue led me to trust that he had been "made upright." But he "sought out many inventions." One of them was of such astounding originality for a country parson, that it has raised him to the distinction of being the only one of the more than three thousand students of Andover Seminary whose services the Commonwealth has found it expedient for its own safety to employ in the State Prison. "All is vanity and vexation of spirit."

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Certain natural tastes and gifts are God's hints of revelation. They cannot be safely crossed. Mischief comes of it. Yet they divert some men from foreign missions, and ought to withhold some from the ministry altogether. The best work done in this world is joyous work. And joyous work must command a man's whole being, free from the friction of misplaced powers and the gasping of stifled tastes.

Still another small section, but an appreciable one, must be omitted, for the want of adequate natural force for the foreign work. Time was, when, of an inferior preacher, the proverb ran, "He may do for a missionary." We are wiser than that now. Foreign missions demand our ablest men. They must stand before kings. They must confound learned and adroit sophists, demolish ancient systems of philosophy, uproot religions which have stood a thousand years. They are to be constructors of new institutions, the founders of churches, of colleges, of professional schools, of national school systems, the creators of written languages from their very alphabet, the originators of a Christian literature in tongues which lack words for Christian thought, the pioneers, defenders, teachers, and fathers of Christian civilization among nations which make gods of their heathen ancestry. Who is sufficient for these things? A young man may be very useful as the pope of a mountain town in New England, — yes, he may grace one of our metropolitan pulpits, — who could

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not be trusted to master the Tamil language, debate in it with erudite Brahmins, and build the foundations of christianized society in Ceylon.

Yet another reduction of the list is made by the misfortune of a few young men in having been born to luxury and wealth — their misfortune, not their fault. With rare exceptions, so rare that they always excite commendatory remark, those are restricted in their range of place and service, who have been reared amidst the refinements and delicacies of an affluent metropolitan home. They can not "endure hardness." The cost of the endurance, beyond the brief stimulus of an emergency, is very apt to be the destruction of health.

In the first year of the civil war, when a regiment from Lowell encamped near Washington by the side of the New-York Seventh, famed for its enlistments from the wealthiest families of the metropolis, the factory operatives and farmer's sons volunteered to the work of the trenches, or something similar, saying to the metropolitans, "You are not made for such work as this." It was true, and no crime of theirs: they were *not* made for it. With mutual and rare generosity, each supplemented the other, every man doing what he *was* made for.

So in the allotments of ministerial service, with just exceptions enough to prove the rule, the sons of luxury and wealth can not be depended upon for rough work. Generally speaking, we do not look to them for recruits for foreign missionary

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service. Other service they can do, and have done nobly. All honor to the young man, who, like the late Dr. Codman of Dorchester, with no necessity of labor for his livelihood, enters the ministry, and remains in it as the loved work of his life! But Dr. Codman could not have done equal service as a missionary, even in Constantinople.

Yet again: the candidates for the foreign service are reduced by considerations of domestic duty and pecuniary liability. One young man has a widowed mother or an invalid sister dependent upon him for society and support. Another is the eldest son of a large and fatherless family. A third, left an orphan in his infancy, has been nurtured and educated by foster-parents, who now in their old age are dependent upon him. A fourth represents dozens, who have debts incurred for their education. They can not honestly leave the country till these debts are paid. Such debts overhang our pastors at home, for ten, even twenty years. One professor in a New-England institution has been paying such a debt in driblets for thirty years. True, parsonages at home are not mines of gold, any more than missionary homes at Beirut; but young men may more reasonably hope to liquidate debts in some way here than abroad.

Once more: students are withheld from the foreign work by the strenuous opposition of family and friends. A father interposes objections, with a power behind which gives them the force of a

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veto. A mother objects with strong crying and tears, which a son can not resist. The best of these young men are but men at best. Through college and seminary one has waited seven years for a certain Rachel, "beautiful and well favored," and "they seem to him but a few days for the love he has to her." But she, at the last moment, draws back from the unknown perils of exile in a foreign land. Unlike her namesake, she does not say, "Whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do." Or, more probably, *her* mother objects, who, unfortunately, does not live in Padan-aram. She breaks down her daughter's courage by a tearful reminder of the fate of Harriet Newell; and the two Niobes together make our young missionary feel that he is a monster. Professor Stuart was an early and life-long friend of missions, and not a man of mawkish sensibilities; yet he never could bring himself to advise a young man to ask, for the sake of the missionary service, release from the marriage-engagement of his youth. Whether such obstacles as these ought to exist or not, they do exist: young men can not control them. They are often the decisive weight thrown into the perhaps trembling scales.

Foreign missions, therefore, when they apply at the doors of a theological seminary for men, are compelled to pass by these various fragments of a graduating class. What, then, is the result? These fractions swell, in the aggregate, into a majority. The result is, that the range of choice for foreign missions is narrowed down to not more than one-

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third, and often to one-fourth, of the whole number of candidates for the ministry. Those who *can* go, those to whom the question is an equal one, those to whom it is even an open question, are but these few. So much the more urgent, then, is the appeal to them. So much the more impressive is the magnitude of their responsibility. So much the more exalted is their privilege. They are the few chosen ones, whose opportunity is world-wide.

Said one of England's great statesmen, in a crisis of the nation's history, and with proud consciousness of a great opportunity, "I am the only man in England who can save this country; and I *can* do it." May not this group of youthful preachers who labor under no local limitations of Christian service say with humbler but more reasonable exultation, "We are the only preachers of Christ who can carry the gospel to the heathen, and we *can* do it"? If this limited fraction, consisting of those who *can*, would volunteer to the work from which their less favored brethren are excluded, our foreign missions would at least be saved from retrogression and disaster. Again: he that hath an ear to hear, let *him* hear.

But this conflict of duties to the home and the foreign work suggests another phase of the experience of the young men in seminaries. It is, that in view of the *universal* cry for re-enforcements, and perhaps weary of the doubts of a hesitating conscience, they often come to the conclusion at last, that it can make but little difference where

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they go. Go where they may, they are but a drop in a maelstrom. Go where they may, they plunge into exigencies beyond their strength. Go where they may, they go under the high pressure of an intense conscience. Neither to the work nor themselves does it seem to matter much which way they turn their steps.

Said Gen. Howard at Gettysburg, to a squad of stragglers who were scrupulously hunting for their regimental colors, "Fall in, boys, fall in under the first flag you come to: there's the enemy: you can't go wrong." So, in the turmoil of this great moral conflict, this little squad of young men sometimes lose sight of "departments" and "fields," of east and west and south. The "here" and "there" become insignificant. They are apt at last to settle the question in the mood of feeling, that, if they "fall in" anywhere, they "can't go wrong." Yet "the first flag they come to" means, perhaps, the vacant pulpit of the church whose spire is visible from their study-windows.

Is not the conclusion of the whole matter, then, the policy of increasing the numbers of candidates for the ministry, and of those especially who seek the ministry, not for its metropolitan and suburban service, but for the sake of its missionary privileges? Let us go to the colleges and the churches for missionary candidates. Let men be drawn from the church to the college, and from the college to the seminary, for the sole purpose of preaching Christ as missionaries only, and they will be the more likely to stick to their first choice.

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Such men make the best missionaries too. The very best are those who never had other ambitions. The charm of David Scudder's brief missionary life was due to the fact that he was born to it. He never had another choice of his life's work. He had no youthful aspirations to surrender. In after-life he had no regretful memories. His whole history was cumulative towards one end. Hence the concentration of his aim. Hence his joy in his work. Hence, too, the fascination of his sway over others and the resplendent promise of his manhood. Such men are the missionary powers, wherever they are, — in the home, in the church, in the college, in the seminary, in the field. Let us multiply such young men, and the future of missions at home and abroad will be progressive and triumphant.

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XXI.

CONGREGATIONALISTS AND PRESBYTERIANS: A PLEA FOR UNION.

CONGREGATIONAL*ism* and Presbyterian*ism* are natural foes, but Congregationalists and Presbyterians are naturally one. Such is the difference between *isms* and the men and women who work them in real life. Has not the time come around again in the cycle of history, when the unity of these two great bodies of Christians should be expressed more palpably to the world's vision? Perhaps not by the resumption of abrogated "plans of union," certainly not by the resurrection of any thing resonant with the echoes of ancient warfare. But in modes congruous with existing modes of thought, and with no loss to the individuality of either, may not these two wings of the Lord's hosts cross over to each other, and march abreast?

They are one in their history. The early evangelizing of this country scarcely knew a difference between them. They professed the same standards of belief; they revered the same great names in the history of the old countries; they inherited

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the same traditions from the Reformation. In this country, President Edwards represents a class of leaders in both churches, who to this day are as venerable to one as to the other. So late as the time of the founding of Andover Seminary, its charter decreed that its professors for ever should be ministers in *either* the Congregational or the Presbyterian communion. That provision was a faithful exponent of the Congregationalism of that day. Our Congregational fathers never dreamed of the time when their successors could not cross the border into the Presbyterian fold, and when Presbyterians could not reciprocate the fellowship, without a stigma upon their loyalty. The dividing line was practically as invisible as the equator.

Hence grew up that grand union of these two bodies in missionary and benevolent activity, which has been the glory of our time. When the seminary at Princeton was founded, it was believed to be, and it was, only an extension of the work begun at Andover. Antagonism between the two was never broached. It has required a half-century of denominational discipline to convince the rank and file of the two churches that they need any other almoner of their foreign missionary bounty than the American Board. Some of them are not yet convinced. Many look back with longing to the ancient brotherhood. Is it decreed that those days have departed never to return?

The two churches are still one in their doctrinal

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faith. Since the re-union of the two branches of the Presbyterian body (disrupted in 1837), and since the re-affirmation of the Westminster Confession by the National Council of Congregationalists at Plymouth, it may be fairly presumed that theological diversities need never again alienate these denominations from each other. Their faith is one. The orthodoxy of Presbyterians has never been questioned in New England; and the New-England theology, once suspected and denounced, has been substantially indorsed by the Presbyterian Church. By a "thirty-years' war" it has established its right *to be* under the Presbyterian banner. No man will ever again be arraigned before the Presbyterian courts for holding the theology of Albert Barnes and Lyman Beecher. That question was settled when Albert Barnes was welcomed back into the re-united Presbyterian Church without a retraction of any word he ever preached or published. With that question was settled, also, the theological soundness of the Congregational clergy as judged by Presbyterian standards; for the Westminster Confession is a common standard to both. The faith of the two, I repeat, is one. No theological grounds remain for alienation between them. No doctrinal reasons exist why the clergy of the two denominations should not cross and recross the border, in the interchange of pastorates, as freely as in the days of Dr. Griffin and Dr. Skinner.

In administrative policy, also, the two churches are

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essentially the same. If one is a trifle more conservative than the other, and the other is a trifle more radical than the one, the difference is not repellent: it is only sufficient to render each the natural complement of the other. Each would be more efficient in union with the other. Both are progressive conservatives; both are conservative reformers. The two ideal foci of all healthy growth represented by the words "conservatism" and "progress" shine as luminously in the one ellipse as in the other. Presbyterians are not Bourbons; Congregationalists are not Jacobins. Both are Girondists. He must be the common enemy of both who would guillotine either.

Even their forms of church polity, so divergent in theory, are not schismatically asunder in practice. Any form of church government is what the spirit is which energizes it. I know a Congregational church in Boston — who does not? — in which affairs are as presbyterially administered as they ever were in the First Presbyterian Church of Baltimore under the trenchant sway of Dr. Breckinridge. The First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, under Albert Barnes, was as congregationally governed in spirit as any one of a hundred churches, taken at random, in Massachusetts.

The two systems of church polity have been modifying each other, the one consolidating and the other liquefying, for two hundred years. In the result, both are developed, in the spirit of the New Testament and of common sense, more sym-

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metrically than if they had not been historically intermingled. The drift towards union of the two denominations is so powerful from other causes, that church polity alone can not keep them long asunder, except in times when denominational blood is at fever-heat. Even then, the hot blood inflames the few, not all. The neighings of ecclesiastical war-horses who scent the battle from afar must not be mistaken for the equal breathings of Christian aspiration by the men and women who make up these hosts of God's elect. *Their* thought of each other is always and profoundly fraternal.

The two denominations are one, also, in respect to the class of minds to which they appeal successfully for support. All the great denominations of Christendom are founded upon certain radical diversities of mental structure. They have not sprung up at hap-hazard. They are not the *fated* outgrowths of history. They have grown out of the same differences of human nature which *make* history. Shrewd observers of character often think they can detect in a good man's countenance the expression of the religious sect to which he *ought* to belong. Do we not all practice thus a physiognomy which is not all guess-work?

Among these diversities of mental structure there is one, which, for the want of a better title adapted to the present purpose, may be termed the Calvinistic order of mind. That is to say, it takes naturally to the Calvinistic class of creeds and methods of working. There are Calvinistic

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natures, and there are Arminian natures. Under circumstances evenly favorable to both these developments of thought, a very large class of men will choose one, and eschew the other, by an instinct as certain as that which induces bees to swarm, and beavers to build dams.

The Calvinistic order of mind is inclined to profound views of truth. It is contemplative before it is active in its religious tastes. It is equable in religious emotion, reverent and calm in its modes of worship, given to looking before and after, to asking for and seeing the reasons of things, yet imbued with a strong element of faith, which is not staggered by beliefs which border hard on contradictions. Withal, it is a *constructive* order of mind. It works in dead earnest, and works out systems of things. It builds for permanence, and looks a long way ahead for results. If you want to make any thing eternal in human affairs, you must build into it, and especially *under* it, a very large proportion of the Calvinistic elements.

To this order of mind, several Christian denominations appeal chiefly for support, of which the two most eminent in English and American history are the Presbyterian and the Congregational. This single point of unity between them is a more imperial power over them both than all their differences put together. Start the two contemporaneously in a new community, as is now so often done on our Western frontier, and they must live, if at all, upon precisely the same elements of so-

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ciety. They must compete for the same families; they must invite the same leadership; and in the result they must develop in that community the same kind of religious forces.

That law of our religious history by which Congregationalists migrating into Presbyterian communities have so largely fallen into the Presbyterian ranks, lies very deep in the natural affinities of the two sects. It is no sign of disloyalty. It is illiberal to question their right to do it, or to censure them for doing it. They obey a law of religious similitude which is more potent and valuable to Christian character than any attachment to church polity can be or ought to be. My father, in New England, lived in a wooden house painted white, with green blinds, as his father did before him. Shall I, therefore, be held untrue to his memory, and faithless to his home, if, when I remove into a clay country, destitute of timber land, I choose to live in a brick or stone house not painted at all?

With so many and so strong lines of gravitation between two great powers of Christendom, why should not the policy of both invite union rather than schism? Does not the new spirit of union among *all* evangelical denominations, and the new pressure from without which is crowding them together, demand this policy specially between these two? With what consistency can we cry aloud and spare not, as we are doing to our Episcopal and Baptist brethren, who constitute the most impregnable fortresses — the Ehrenbreitstein

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and Strasbourg — of religious seclusion, if we will not ourselves embrace each other, when we have so little in our fundamental convictions to separate us?

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XXII.

CONGREGATIONALISTS AND PRESBYTERIANS: METHODS OF UNION.

How can the policy of these two denominations towards each other be liberalized without sacrifice of principles sacred to either? I answer briefly, in the following ways, if in no other.

1. In establishing new churches in the Western frontier States, let us more generously yield to the law of majorities. Abandon the wretched policy of building two churches for Presbyterian and Congregational weaklings to starve in and to snarl in at each other because both are starving. Build the one church, and let the majority have it; the minority giving a cordial support. A Union Church, under such circumstances, does not meet the case. Indeed, a Union Church is a misnomer anywhere. There is something comical in the innocence with which a Congregational deacon should say, as no respectable deacon ever did say, to a Presbyterian elder, "Come now, let us have no presbytery and no council, but let us come together and manage our own affairs in our own way, in a Union Church." We must not

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expect our Presbyterian friends to be so conveniently short-sighted as not to see that that is Congregationalism distilled to the very "proof-spirit" of independency. Nobody wants that, unless it be the Plymouth Church of Brooklyn. No, not that for us. Let us fairly give in to the law of majorities.

2. Why not encourage, rather than resist, the mutual transfer of the ministry between Congregational and Presbyterian pulpits? The Old Brick Church of New York has seldom had a pastor not trained in Andover Seminary. Three times in succession, within twenty years, it has invited to its pastorship men trained in Congregational schools, and thorough-bred in Congregational traditions. At one time every professor in the Union Theological Seminary of New York, save possibly one, was a man of Congregational birth or training; all but two had been students in Andover Seminary; and three of them were once Congregational pastors. Princeton College and Seminary, too, have men, once Congregational pastors, among their professors. Why is not this as it should be?

When, on the other hand, the Central Church of Boston and the Broadway Tabernacle of New York invite Presbyterians to become their pastors, when the American Board calls Dr. Treat from a Presbyterian church to be its secretary, and when Andover Seminary invites the Presbyterian Dr. Skinner to its rhetorical chair, why is not this *as*

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well? Why not break down and bury all iron barriers between the two sects? Let the separation be but by a willow network. More even: let it be but an invisible line, which the ministry on either side may cross and recross as unconsciously as they would cross the line of the meridian in a Cunard steamer. What if the result should be that Congregationalism would give more than it would receive? What does that signify, except that it *has* more to give of such materials as the church universal wants? The most creative and self-diffusive good that is done in this world is that of which the doers do not get the credit to themselves, but in the doing of which they are buried under other names. Is not just that the history of Congregationalism, indeed, of New-England institutions generally? And is it not the glory of any good thing, that such should be its mission for the present? The resurrection is to come by and by.

3. Why not apply to church-extension by these two denominations in *old* communities the same law of comity which foreign missionary boards recognize in their treatment of each other? They hold themselves bound in honor not to interfere with each other, not to build on each other's foundation, not to disturb in the heathen mind each other's prestige. When the ritualists of England sent a bishop, gorgeous with ecclesiastical regalia, to tempt the Hawaiians from their allegiance to their Presbyterian and Congregational

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fathers, the American Board protested against it as an outrage; and all liberal Episcopalians in England and America seconded the protest. This was as it should have been. The great missionary organizations recognize each other, not as rivals, but as friends; not as competitors, but as co-workers. Each leaves to another its chosen field. Neither insults another by presuming that its work needs to be done over again; but all rejoice in the success of each as being the success of every other. This has become the recognized law of missionary comity, as well established as any law of nations.

Why, then, is not the principle just as sound and wise when applied to church extension by Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the older States, where both have here and there a history of success, and a prestige, which it is an evil to disturb? Why should a Presbyterian church ever have existed in New England? Why should a Congregational church have ever been planted in Pennsylvania? Nothing has been gained by either which could not have been more economically gained by the dominant denomination first in possession of the field and of the hearts of the people. There is always more or less of needless waste of religious forces, when a denomination must work with few and feeble and unknown churches, by the side of another rich and great and compact, and with a splendid history behind it, and yet so nearly like its feeble competitor, that the world can see no valid reason for the competition. Na-

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tional traditions, pride of ancestry, attachment to early reminiscences, are not sufficient reasons for starting *counter-currents* of religious sympathy. Said Napoleon to the French Directory, when they talked of sending another general into Italy to co-operate with him in the command, "Do not disturb the *unity* of military power in Italy. One bad general is better than two good ones." The event proved that he was right. When will the Church be as wise in its policy of denominational extension? Is it to be never till Romish unity by its terrific conquests drives us to it?

I know very well that much may be said on the more narrowly and intensely sectarian side of these questions. But the drift of the public mind runs deep and strong towards the submerging of minor diversities among Christians who are essentially one. God has a meaning in this imperative demand for union. It is his work that the world wearies of Christian alienations. It is a hint of his will that men of the world shrug their shoulders at the whole idea of *competition* among Christian churches.

If I do not misread the page of Providence, Christian union must be served chiefly in two ways. In the first place, those sects, which, like the Episcopal and the Baptist, have intrenched themselves behind the walls of one or two dogmas which the rest of the church universal *can not* accept, have a work of simple surrender before them. Those two non-essentials — close communion and

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apostolical succession — must be given up. They are foredoomed. Those two denominations, be it said in all kindness, can never do much for the cause of Christian unity, till the doom of those two dogmas is seen and accepted. In the second place, other sects, like the two discussed in these pages, which in faith, in policy, in history, and in character, are so nearly one that a century has scarcely taught the world the difference between them, must *become* one in every thing that can excite in them the sense of alienation, or that can make the world sensible of the spectacle of competition. Are we not called upon therefore, by a voice which we may not ignore with impunity, to reconsider questions which our sectarian wisdom, as we have thought, had settled for ever? Such union as is here contemplated between these two great branches of the Church would inevitably be the precursor of other and grander advances toward the fulfillment of our Lord's prayer, "that they *all* may be one."

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XXIII.

THE PREACHING OF ALBERT BARNES.

THE effects of his early preaching resembled those of the later preaching of Chalmers at Kilmany. He was thoroughly possessed with the spirit of the early revivals of New England. His preaching was always expectant of revivals. Yet he worked and lived at the antipodes from every thing like ranting excitement. He relied largely on doctrinal preaching for the instrumental forces of such awakenings. One of the most fruitful revivals that blessed his ministry followed a series of discourses on the doctrine of divine decrees. The sermon for which he was first arraigned for heresy was a doctrinal epitome of the whole system of grace. It was entitled "The Way of Salvation," and was afterwards expanded into a volume of thirty-six discourses bearing the same title. He preached it for the instruction of a large class of recent converts. Yet it never seemed to occur to his prosecutors that there was any thing incongruous in calling him down from a powerful work of the grace of God to answer to their Book of Discipline.

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At Philadelphia, whither he removed from his brief pastorate at Morristown, the same scenes were repeated. The whoop of "Heresy!" was redoubled, and again responded to by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. "The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind." There was something electric in the current of his early ministrations in Philadelphia. They produced a silent upheaval of the elements in that venerable church. Professing Christians of long standing gave up their religious hopes, under the searching and sifting ministry of the young pastor. His three published sermons, entitled "Enemies of the Cross of Christ," I know to have been prepared and preached under the conviction that certain well-known members of his church were unregenerate men, for whose souls he must give account. He preached to such hearers in the style of "Edwards on the Affections."

Some of his eminent parishioners left the church, and sought repose elsewhere from his severe fidelity. One, a lawyer, sought refuge in the Episcopal Church, avowing as his reason, "I must go where I can enjoy my religion: Mr. Barnes makes me feel that I haven't any." In another instance, a member of the church, after years had elapsed, thus described the effect of Mr. Barnes's early sermons upon him, as I recall it, substantially: "I was convicted of sin as I had never been before. I saw that my old hope was a false one; and oh, how I hated the man for so breaking up my peace!

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If I had had any doubt of my lost state, the enmity of my heart to him was enough to undeceive me. I would have dismissed him in a week if I could; but I dared not say a word, the people loved him so. And so I fumed and raged, carrying hell within me, till the grace of God broke me down. I owe my soul to Albert Barnes." This gentleman expressed his belief that there were others in the church whose religious character underwent a similar change. I have some reason to think that Mr. Barnes's views of the evidences of conversion underwent some modification subsequently; but he always spoke with great respect of "Edwards on the Affections," and his preaching to Christians was often in the heart-searching vein of that book.

If I were to sum up in brief the resources of his power in the pulpit, I should say that they were centered in good sense, good will, and good courage. He was not a genius in any of the common acceptations of that word. He had neither the brilliancy nor the eccentricity of genius in his preaching. His pulpit was burdened by no self-contradictions, no flings at creeds, no ranting about character as opposed to orthodoxy, and no fogs which muddle hearers as to what he did believe. He did not love the pyrotechnic school of pulpit eloquence. Both in matter and manner he was one of the calmest men I ever heard. He stood in the pulpit like a statue, rarely moving any thing but his lips and his eyelids; yet for

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power to feel his way inward to the heart-strings of hearers, and play upon them at will "to the Dorian mood of flutes and soft recorders," I have never heard his equal. His sermons furnished an admirable illustration of his own classification of the theologies: that "there is a theology which can, and a theology which can not, *be preached.*" He tested all systems by the pulpit. Like the greatest theologians of all ages, and the truest, inspired and uninspired, he was *first* a preacher, *then* a theologian. His was therefore emphatically the theology which *can be* preached, — a sensible, self-consistent, well-poised, and large-hearted theology; biblical in its proportions as well as in its principles, and therefore consonant with the necessary beliefs of men. It had all the elements of a working theology; and he built it up, and buttressed it and adorned it with an inexhaustible fund of biblical thought. He preached it with inimitable candor and loveliness of spirit, yet with a still courage which feared the face of no mortal man.

I never knew another man who could pack so much thought into a sermon, and yet popularize it all so thoroughly that all classes of intellect could understand it, and all hearts feel it. I have never heard another preacher who could say such severe things without a word of splenetic censure. He resembled John Foster in his power of "pumping," as Foster used to call it, profound thought up to the surface of popular speech; yet he did not, like Foster, drive his audience out of doors

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in the doing of it. He would preach a sacramental sermon to his church in the morning, an extemporaneous sermon to his sabbath school in the afternoon, and a sermon to medical students in the evening of the same day; and all three discourses seemed strung on the same thread of philosophical and biblical suggestion, yet all equally intelligible and interesting to the hearers. His doctrinal sermons, of which students in theology took notes, as of lectures in systematic divinity, — they were so clear, so logical, so compact, and so exhaustive, — were borrowed and copied by invalid ladies for the strength and good cheer they gave in the sick-room. His versatility of adaptation was something wonderful. To a looker-on it became a study, like the secret marvels of vegetation, which astonishes us by its power to do so many things so well; and like that, also, was his working in its stillness.

His courage was of the unconscious sort. It was no exultant foresight of victory, but the artless boldness of a child. Blustering men were apt to mistake his silence for timidity, because it was his way to let such men have their soliloquy to themselves. His book on American slavery was a thesaurus to the abolitionists for twenty years; yet their unchristian bravado repelled him from co-operation with them. He often said, "If a good cause could be killed, antislavery would be so, by the intemperance of its friends." But he preached the substance of his book to his peo-

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ple at a time when millions of property sat along the aisles of his church, coined out of slave-labor on cotton and rice plantations. He did it with the air of one who did not for a moment conceive it possible to do any thing else. He was a prophet of the Lord, sent to give that message, and he gave it. That was the revealed duty of the hour, and he did it. His more timid friends trembled for the result, but not he; and I doubt whether anybody ever ventured to suggest the fear to him. Nobody dared to organize an opposition to him on that ground; yet I often heard the wish expressed that he would keep his antislavery to his books, and not speak it in the pulpit. He was not the man to hoodwink his conscience in that way. In those days I never heard a sermon from him on the doctrine of the atonement, which he did not mould into a hot shot against slavery.

I shall never forget one occasion on which he thus turned the battery of doctrinal theology against what he did not scruple to denounce as "the accursed system," on which "Heaven could never smile." Be it remembered that his hearers were soundly orthodox believers in the Westminster Confession, and specially in the central truth of the atonement; yet among them were old slaveholders, as hearty believers in the necessity of "the evil" by which their property had been amassed, and the houses of their children had been built, and beautified with all that money could purchase, and culture could desire. It was at a

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time — in those days Philadelphia scarcely ever knew any different time — when the fight waxed hot between the friends and the foes of slaveholding. The pulpits were not few in which silence reigned on the whole subject. It is now believed that the "irrepressible conflict" had more to do than any thing else with the rupture of the Presbyterian Church. Some preachers of high repute had words of censure for the abolitionists only. Mobs were rampant against free speech and "free niggers" alike. William Lloyd Garrison's life was not safe in Pennsylvania Hall. The firemen were forbidden to play upon that hall when it was in flames. The provost of the university apologized blandly for the murderers of Lovejoy at Alton. Probably no other Northern city contained so many emigrant slaveholders from the South, and so many runaway slaves; and no other was, therefore, so difficult a spot in which to stand up and speak for the slave to a "respectable audience." But it was precisely the spot, and those were, above all others, the surroundings, in which Mr. Barnes could do no otherwise than put to hazard his reputation and his influence in words of truth and soberness. His theme on the occasion referred to was, "The love of God in the gift of a Saviour."

He first showed that salvation originated in the love of God; then, that it was the grandest expression of love of which a finite mind could conceive; and, finally, that it was planned and

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executed for the world. In the first two-thirds of the discourse, he interwove argument and illustration, and emotive appeal, and most tender soliloquy, till the whole house was hushed, and many eyes were swimming at the thought of the love of an Infinite Heart for a lost soul. The inherited faith, and the matured convictions, and the personal experiences, of his hearers, were all committed to swell the current of sympathy with the preacher, which evidently held the assembly fast. Every eye was fixed upon him; every breath was mute; the very children looked up, awed by the presence of an unseen power, as his mellifluous voice rolled out like the vibrations of a bell his sonorous and welling periods. Then, when the *still* excitement, which nothing else produces like the preaching of the gospel, seemed to be at its height, — as if human feeling could rise no higher, and could bear no more, — he lifted up his eyes, and glancing around till every corner of the house seemed as if penetrated by the light of God's countenance, and summoned to hear God's words, with the single sharp perpendicular *blow* of the right hand (one of the only two gestures he ever used) he said, "And I love to feel, and will feel — it makes me love the gospel more, and the Saviour more — that for the black man of Africa he died, whether sunk in debasement on his native shore . . . or whether borne a captive across the ocean, and bound down by ignorance and toil in Christian lands. He is a

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man, an immortal man, a redeemed man, and not a chattel or a thing. Christ died not for chattels and for things: he died for souls, for men, for immortal minds, for those who may yet burst every shackle and every bond, and range the world of glory as immortal freemen. . . . He who makes an arrangement by which any class of men is excluded from the gospel invades the prerogative of God, prohibits what he commands, and exposes himself to the wrath of the Almighty. Any system of things on earth which prevents the fair promulgation of the gospel is a violation of the arrangements of Heaven, and will sooner or later meet the curse of the Most High."

The effect was of a singular sort, such as I have never witnessed before or since in a magnetized assembly. It was not startling. There was no outcry, no springing to the feet, no speaking, and responses of admiring eyes. But the stillness suddenly deepened like the silence of the elements which precedes an earthquake; while a weight like that of an Atlantic tidal wave seemed to roll in, as if ingulfing every man, woman, and child under the dread anathema. For a moment we all seemed to lie there, buried "deeper than ever plummet sounded." Then came a positive physical relief to eyes and ears and lungs and heart, as if we rose again into our native air, when the preacher fell back into his beautiful colloquial style and tones, like the gentle pattering of the farewell shower when the storm is over. I have

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heard many sermons on the atonement since that day, and many diatribes against oppression, but never any thing like that. That has always been my *beau ideal* of doctrinal preaching. Many times during the war of the rebellion that prophet's voice sounded again in my ears: "Sooner or later, the curse of the Most High! Sooner or later, the curse of the Most High!"

It was difficult for an appreciative listener to Mr. Barnes to be sensible, at the time, of any fault in his preaching, such was his winning magnetism over a hearer, and so nearly faultless seemed the personal character of the man. The *power of person* was supreme among the factors of his influence in the pulpit. I doubt whether any idolized pastor was ever more hallowed than he in the judgment of his parishioners, after his dominion among them had had time to consolidate itself. "I have known him now for twelve years," said one of his elders, "and I never detected in him a sin or a folly." Such was the general feeling at the time of which I write; and this reverent affection for the man reduplicated the power of his pulpit.

But there were two things, which, it seems to me, were evils in their bearing upon his preaching. One was his own infidel experience in his early manhood. He made no secret of this. He often spoke of it with modest sadness, deprecating its effect upon his Christian character; and it was a favorite effort with him to make his own life in

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that respect a warning to other young men. He used to say, "After twenty years of, as I hope, Christian life, my mind is not yet clear of infidel habits of thinking and feeling." No one else would have suspected this, if he had not disclosed it; but the effect of that passage in his life which *was* perceptible to others, though not to him, was that it inclined him to make excessive concessions to infidelity, and to preach disproportionately upon subjects bearing upon the phases of the infidel argument. His candor to opponents sometimes made more impression than his argument against them. In his eagerness to concede every thing that could be fairly claimed, he sometimes granted more than could be proved, and the after-process of building up his faith did not always undo the evil. At times, also, the proportions of his preaching were more largely in the line of Christian polemics than the experience of his hearers needed. He built upward less than he laid the foundations for.

The other thing which sometimes affected his preaching unfortunately was a peculiarity of his temperament, which I have not seen noticed in any of the published comments upon his life and works. It was a morbid sensitiveness to suffering. The spectacle of this in others keenly wounded and depressed him; and the thought of it, as pervading so largely this world and another in God's universe, often appalled him. Hence his remarkable "Confessions," in his sermon entitled "God

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worthy of Confidence," which have made Universalists and infidels exultant over his theology. "I confess," he says, "when I look upon a world of sinners and of sufferers, upon death-beds and graveyards, upon the world of woe filled with hosts to suffer for ever . . . and when I feel that God only can save them, and yet that he does not do it, I am struck dumb. It is all dark, dark, dark, to my soul, and I can not disguise it. In the distress and anguish of my own spirit I confess that I see no light whatever. I have never seen a particle of light thrown on these subjects that has given a moment's ease to my tortured mind."

These are appalling words from a Christian pulpit. One can not wonder that infidelity takes advantage of them to the discredit of the faith which nurtured them. But to understand them we must give large room to the deep and gentle sensibilities of the preacher. Suffering was a more profound and portentous reality to his soul than to the average of men. The world of despair was a ghastly anomaly in God's universe. He preached it without flinching; but those sermons were subdued and plaintive in their tone, — the wail of an agonized spirit. He had none of the hardness of an athlete in his make, but the gentleness of a woman, rather, whom "the winds of heaven" had never been permitted to "visit roughly." When his life-long friend, Matthias Baldwin, lay upon his death-bed, Mr. Barnes threw his arms around his

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neck, and wept aloud. His loving nature recoiled from a Draconian theory of retribution. He was once exhausted almost to fainting by the preaching of a sermon upon future punishment. I never saw him shed a tear; but I have no doubt that he did weep, often and bitterly, over this world's anguish and the lost world's horrors.

This sensitiveness to suffering disclosed itself in many minor ways. He could take no pleasure in the recreations of sportsmen. He shrunk from angling, and doubted the moral rectitude of it as an amusement. He felt at times a mortal aversion to the sea: to him it was an immense burial-place. He thought of it as the maelstrom of wrecked and burning ships, with their helpless freight of men and women and children and babes. When his physician advised a voyage for his salvation from threatened blindness, he encountered the perils of the Atlantic with extreme reluctance. Before embarking, he discussed with his friends the point of casuistry, — whether a man might rightly seek death by drowning to escape death by fire. It is a token of the genial relations existing between him and his friend Dr. Brainerd, that the latter tried to amuse his dejected spirits by telling him that he need not fear either; for "a man who was born to be hanged would never be drowned."

While this peculiarity of his temperament did not amount to any thing unmanly in the common vocations of life, I think it did sometimes affect

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the fiber of his faith, and the tone of his preaching, on divine retribution. He could not preach it exultingly. The argument from reason in defense of it made no impression on him whatever. He accepted it solely as a revelation from God. It was to him a profound and insoluble mystery, into the philosophy of which he had no heart to inquire.

These defects, however, if they must be called such, were but spots on the sun. As a whole, his pulpit was a burning and shining light to the Church of God. But few such illumine her history. For myself, I esteem it a privilege to place on record my own grateful sense of obligation to him, such as I owe to no other man but one.

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XXIV.

A VACATION WITH DR. BUSHNELL.

SOME years ago it was my privilege to spend the major part of a summer vacation with this rare man in the Green Mountains. Some impressions which I received of his mental structure, and of his theology, and of his religious character, deserve recording.

He was visibly worn out by disease. His countenance bore the look of distant yet fast-coming dissolution, which but one malady gives to the human eye. Yet he was as full of courage, as full of life and of his life's work, as he could have been when thirty years younger. Few men have ever impressed me as being so electric with vitality at all points as he was. He was an enthusiast in his love of rural sights and sounds and sports, in little things as brimful as in great things. He seemed the *beau ideal* of a live man. The supremacy of mind over body was something wonderful. One could not but feel a new assurance of the soul's immortality in witnessing the easy and unconscious power with which his spirit swayed the physical frame which was secretly

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enticing him down to the grave. For seventeen years he had kept death at bay: and, at the time I speak of, medical diagnosis revealed that but one lung supported his remnant of life; yet that semi-form of life seemed equal to the prime of many a hale man. The *abandon* of his recreations in the bowling-alley, where he was a boy again, and his theological talks of a Sunday evening, told the same story. "Dying, and behold we live," recurred once and again in listening to the conversations in which he was sure to be the center and the seer.

I have never heard from any other man, in the same length of time, so much of original remark. There is but little original thought in this world, at the best. The most learned of us have often the least of it. At forty-five men are apt to find this world, as the author of Ecclesiastes did, very stale. "The thing which hath been, it is that which shall be." Only now and then a thinker comes along, like Coleridge or Isaac Taylor, so full of originality that he creates an atmosphere laden with the spices of other worlds around him; and for that the wise men of the East call him "eccentric." They bring incense to him from afar, nevertheless. Prophets and apostles are always eccentric men. Doubtless we shall find Gabriel an eccentric spirit, if we ever get within sight and hearing of him. Somebody must do the work of the wise men; but for spurring us out of our jog-trot, and for revealing our wings to our own con-

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sciousness, and for teaching us our first flights, give us more of the eccentric men. Rev. Dr. Kirk once told me that the most stimulating books to him were almost all heresy.

One of the eccentric but winged spirits was Dr. Bushnell. It was not his way to talk for the sake of colloquial courtesy. He never *made* conversation. He would not assent to your say out of conventional politeness. From no courtly presence on earth could he ever have backed out with meek obeisance. Nothing was more natural to him than to write letters of advice to popes. His common talks were varied by similar quaint ways. If you said a silly thing or a dull one, you must carry it: he would not help you out of it. If he had himself nothing worth saying to utter, he kept silent. He could make silence mean more than the speech of other men. Awkward pauses would sometimes happen. But, when he spoke, all ears were alert with the assurance that they should hear something which they would not willingly lose. The cloud in the western sky, the shadow on Bread Loaf Mountain, the song of the oriole in the apple-tree, the trout in the brook, the clover in the fields, the habits of the mountain-ash, were all hints to his mind of something different from their suggestions to other observers. Language, too, in his talk, as in his books, he used often not as other men.

One could not long discourse with him, even on the common things and in the undress of life,

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without discovering the secret of his solitude in the theological world. That solitude was not in him, as it is in some men, an affectation of independence: it was in the original make of the man. He was by nature a *solitaire* in his thinking. Nothing struck him as it did the average of men. He was not one of the average. He took in all things, and reflected back all things, at angles of his own. He never could have been a partisan. With many of the tastes of leadership, he could never have led a party, or founded a school: still less could he have been a follower of other leaders. It was not in him to *herd* with his kind. He recalled to one's thoughts Wordsworth's apostrophe to Milton: —

"Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart."

At the time I mention, he was preparing for the press the last edition of his work on the "Atonement." Several times he spoke of it as the only thing for which he desired to live. He brought the unfinished sheets from his sick-room to the mountains, hoping to gain "force enough" to "round out" his views by his latest "insight." Other subjects of theological controversy he would have been glad to undertake, for on them all he believed that he had conceptions which no other man had; but he would say of them, "There isn't force enough left in me to express myself upon them."

It was obvious that his own ideal of his life's work was that of *discovery*. If he had nothing to

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say to the world which was fresh to his own mind, he had nothing worth his saying or the world's hearing. Some men spend the closing years of their lives in gathering up and labelling, and storing in the world's libraries, the fruit of labors long past, and which to themselves have become old. Dr. Bushnell seemed not to regard *exhumed* accumulations of literature as worth reviving. A thought once buried did not deserve resuscitation. That which he should say to his fellow-men should be as new to himself as to them. When he had exhausted his power of discovery, — his "insight," as he was fond of calling it, — he had lost some of the prime qualities of power in communication.

There is some truth in this. The fresh mind is the magnetic mind. "The immortals are always young." The new truth is the fire and the hammer. The soul which is aflame with latest discovery is the light which the world waits for. To the world of the future all other powers knock for admission in vain, if they do not come making obeisance to this one. Even great thinkers have sometimes outlived their life's work. Their book has come too late for a docile reading.

The mercurial thinker of Hartford held and acted upon some such theory. He was a looker on and up to the firmament of truth, and whatsoever he *saw* there he proclaimed to the waiting multitudes below, or to the few who trusted his vision. When the vision ended, he was silent. Of errors in his published opinions he spoke as freely

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as if they had never been his. "If I see men as trees walking, I do not know that it is my fault." Not till the superlative vision was vouchsafed to him was it his mission to tell that. The vital thing was the latest discovery. "The prophet that hath a dream let him tell a dream." He was emphatically a seer, not a reasoner. The last and least thing that concerned him was the consistency of his present with his past opinions, or of either with the revelation of to-morrow.

He cherished a profound disrespect for overgrown libraries. He would have assented to the judgment of those who have thought that the burning of the Alexandrian Library was probably no loss to the world, and that perhaps a large part of the libraries of the British Museum and of Paris could not be worth their storage. Psychologically, his mind was such as the Grecian mythology represented in the sibyls, and such as a purer revelation might naturally elect as its prophet. If he had been a pupil of Socrates, he would have had absolute faith in the "Demon." In this prophetic and intuitive working of his mind, though in other respects no two men could be more unlike, he reminded me strongly of Professor Stuart.

"What does Dr. Bushnell mean?" was the title of one of the earliest and best criticisms of his theology, by Dr. Goodrich of New Haven. The inquiry, in substance, has been the first on the lips of his critics ever since. It was central in my very

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few theological talks with him. He was one of the men, like Hegel, whose misfortune and whose fault it is never to be understood to their liking.

He honestly believed, that, in his divergence from the popular theology upon the philosophy of the atonement, he retained all that is essential to a saving faith. Not only this, but he believed that he retained more of the truth than his critics did. His divergence was no divergence, but only a deepening of the old faith. It was a delving into a vein of underlying gold. More even than this: he thought he was nearer to the fountain-head of the very doctrine which his critics were trying to conserve than they were themselves. In their imagined conflict with himself, he thought, that, to a large extent, they battled with men of straw of their own creating. What they meant by "vicarious sacrifice" he meant, and a great deal more: so much more, that his meaning outgrew and wore out the ancient phrase. He could afford, therefore, to speak very genially of his opponents. They were, in his view, unconscious co-workers with him, so far as they knew. The difference between them and him was only that he knew much more. His drill had penetrated a deeper vein of purer treasure. He had "entered into the springs of the sea." He had discovered "the way where light dwelleth." They preached Christ, but he more profoundly. "What then? Notwithstanding, every way, Christ is preached, and I rejoice." Such was his apostolic mood.

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He spoke of the first edition of "The Vicarious Sacrifice" as erroneous, in the sense of being but a partial vision, yet true enough so far as it went. Of the revision of it, on which he was then engaged, he spoke as likely to be regarded by his readers as a *return* towards the current evangelical faith, so far, at least, as it should be understood by them. It was amusing to see the simplicity with which he distinguished between his real faith and that *eidolon* of it which words could convey to readers. Language was to him, at the best, but a wretched make-shift for the conveyance of thought. He probably would have agreed with those who conjecture that perhaps, in heaven, pure music will be a medium of expressing thought, superior to the most perfect of human dialects.

On the whole, he made upon me the impression of a mind *still in movement* on the central theme of the Christian faith; not doubtful, so far as he had discovered, yet not resting in ultimate convictions. More than once, his explanations and qualifications, and quaint uses of language, suggested to me the conjecture, that, if he could have years more of study and of disciplinary experience, he might come around, through paths and by-paths of his own, to faith in the very dogmas which he was then combating. It is not always the truth which an inquirer disbelieves, but the angles and refractions through which minds differently constituted have come at the truth. Give him time, and do not badger him with hard names, and he will often

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discover truth through lenses and prisms of his own making.

At any rate, Dr. Bushnell claimed to be a believer, if an eccentric one, in the faith of the fathers. He held himself to be substantially at one with the great body of the Church in all that they really believed of the "faith in Christ." Yet whether he was so or not concerned him little. Truth lay between him and God, not between him and the Church. He was simply one of God's seers. He was commissioned to paint the vision precisely as he saw it in the mount. The reception of it by other minds was their affair, not his. Such, as nearly as I could gather it from our few and fragmentary conversations, was his theory of the true work of a theologian, rather of *his* work as a theologian; for he was very gentle in his criticisms of the work of other men. He had his own telescope, and they had theirs: that the instruments differed was no evidence that both might not be true: the field of vision was very broad. I am confident that he has gone from us with no such idea of his own dissent from the faith of his brethren as they have.

And the sense of that dissent, I must confess, grew dim in my own mind when I came near to the inner spirit of the man. That was beautifully and profoundly Christlike, if that of uninspired man ever was. Be the forms of his belief what they may have been, he was eminently a man of God. Christ was a reality to him. Christ lived

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in him to a degree realized only in the life of devout believers. I had heard him criticised as brusk in manner, even rude in his controversial dissents. Scarcely a shade of that kind was perceptible in him at that time. The gentleness of womanhood breathed in his few and cautious expressions of Christian feeling. Of the sure coming of death he spoke reservedly, but with unqualified trust. The charity of a large fraternal heart characterized his judgments of men. His whole bearing was that of one whom time and suffering had advanced far on towards the closing stages of earthly discipline.

Now and then a glimpse appeared of rougher speech; as when, objecting to the use of the Lord's Prayer in public worship, he condensed the whole argument against it by saying rather gruffly to an Episcopal friend, "I don't want to *say* prayers, I want to *pray*." But his general bearing was that of one whom life had chastened to the utmost, and who was then walking thoughtfully far down the valley of gentle shadows. We discussed some of his clerical critics, who have handled his opinions without lenity, and I do not recall from him a single caustic judgment of one of them.

Differing from him essentially, as I supposed, in his theory of the atonement, I still could not but see, that, in its effects upon his personal character, that theory had been to him apparently just what the faith of other believers in Christ is to them. It was indeed no theory: it was a faith and a life.

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Few men have I known to whom Christ as a Saviour seemed to be *so* profound a reality as to him. Christ had been obviously the center of his thinking and believing for twoscore years. The results had come to him in answer to the inquiries of a struggling spirit. In no other answer could he find rest; but in that he did rest with a trust as deep and calm as I have ever heard from the lips of a believer.

His theory of the impotence of language was as vividly illustrated in his expression of personal faith in Christ as in that of any mystery of theology. Some of his published utterances to that effect take on a new significance to one whose imagination can reproduce the melting eye and the subdued pathos of love with which he repeated them in the stillness of the evening and among the shadows of the mountain. To the hope which I once expressed, that, in his revision of his volume, he would hold fast to the faith in a divine sacrifice for sin, he replied with inimitable emphasis, "I *do* hold it fast."

What shall we say of such men in our theological classifications? Where shall we locate them in the schools? It will never do to set them aside as heretics, and leave them there. In character they are better than their infirm and eccentric beliefs are. Let us find a place for them near to our hearts, so far as they are near to Christ.

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XXV.

PRAYER VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS.

THE Rev. Dr. Norman McLeod records in his journal this sentiment, "The poorest man who is great in prayer is, perhaps, a greater man in affecting the destinies of the world than the Emperor of Russia." This to thoughtful Christians is a truth familiar on the verge of commonplace. But it falls on the ears of an incredulous world. Men ask what evidence we have to support such astounding pretensions. We draw, in part, upon the conscious experience of believers for an answer.

1. The consciousness of praying men bears witness *that the evidence of the power of prayer is all that the case admits of.* The world laughed at a theologian, who, a few years ago, essayed to prove the doctrine of the Trinity by the formulæ of trigonometry, and the freedom of the will by the oscillations of a pendulum.

The principle here involved governs the evidence of the reality of prayer. It is not mathematically demonstrable. Triangles can not prove

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it. The civil engineer can not estimate it. The strength of it can not be tested as you would test the strength of a suspension-bridge. The nature of the things concerned rules out all that kind of evidence. The Christian consciousness finds within itself *spiritual* facts witnessing to *spiritual* power. It trusts those facts. Why not? Why is not your soul's vision of truth as credible as the sight of your eyeball? Why must I accept the testimony of my optic nerve, with which I have often seen double, and reject my inner consciousness of things of which I can take cognizance in no other way? Like witnesseth to like; matter to matter; spirit to spirit. This is the law both of reason and of faith. God is not in the wind, nor in the tempest, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice.

2. The Christian consciousness confirms the fact, which all prayer assumes, *of direct communion between the human mind and the mind of God.* Varying in degree of vividness, this witness of spirit to spirit is, perhaps, the most uniform experience of real prayer. The believer is conscious of exercises which he can not attribute to any other cause than the real and personal agency of God.

Thoughts are often suggested which the believer feels that *he* did not originate. Preachers have told us of such mental illumination in prayer, by which obscure texts of Scripture have been lighted up, difficult plans of sermons have been opened to them with an affluence of material, and a sudden-

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ness of development which impress them irresistibly with the conviction, "This is the work of God; this is the teaching of the Holy Ghost; this is the fulfillment of the promise, 'It shall be given you what ye shall say.'" The Rev. Dr. Finney more than once cast aside the elaborated sermon which he had brought to the pulpit, to make room for another, on a new text and a different theme, which seemed to be *revealed* to him in the preceding prayer.

Emotions often fill the praying soul which we can not otherwise as rationally account for as by the simple fact that the Infinite One is present, drawing the suppliant to communion with himself. "The Lord is in this place," said the awestruck patriarch. That feeling in a believer's soul often has the vividness of vision. A voice proclaiming the fact from the heavens would not be more convincing.

Revolutions of feeling often occur in prayer, of which the most probable explanation is, that they are the work of God. Hope takes the place of despondency. Love displaces fear. Rest follows self-conflict. Trust expels forebodings. Assurance of pardon lifts off suddenly the leaden weight of guilt. Remorse transformed to penitent faith is one of the most revolutionary changes of which the human spirit is susceptible. Poetry and romance discover nothing else like it in the history of human passions. Yet this is one of the most common experiences of believing prayer.

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Conversion is often one of the facts of prayer. A sinner kneels, oppressed by guilt, in fear of hell, self-degraded beyond the reach of language to portray, crushed by the accumulated wrath of God, raging, it may be, with impotent resistance to Almighty Will. Then a change comes over the suffering and guilty spirit. Penitence rises; tears flow; hope dawns; trust springs; love, joy, peace, well up from secret depths never before unsealed. *Something* has stilled the storm. Some *power* has said to the angry waters, "Peace," and there is a great calm. The *man* seems to himself to have been a helpless recipient in the change. The consciousness of GOD in it so overwhelms all consciousness of self, that the soul thinks of and feels none else than God.

Power of speech is often marvelously quickened in prayer. Emotions which the soul has struggled with long and painfully find sudden outlet in language of which the praying one never conceived before. Some men can habitually speak in prayer as nowhere else. An unlettered Christian was once summoned into court in a trial in which he had much at stake. He was called upon to tell his own story. He was flustered, he stammered, he repeated and contradicted himself, and was in danger of losing his case for want of the power of utterance. He knew himself, and knew that there was one act in which he could talk. He begged of the judge liberty to pray. It was granted. He knelt down, and with flowing tears poured out

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his case before the Lord in language clear, coherent, fluent, and convincing to the jury. Be this story literally true or not, it illustrates a fact well known to believers in the reality of prayer. A man is known to me, who in common life is an incorrigible stammerer: he can not say a word without making it three. He is the butt of mimics. But in prayer his utterance is Ciceronian. Few men *can* mimic him in that. One prayer offered by the late Professor Stuart more than forty years ago is still remembered, and fragments of it rehearsed, as a most thrilling approach to apostolic inspiration.

"The Spirit helpeth our infirmities." How often does the promise come home to the struggling suppliant, as a fact revealed! Apostles had no monopoly of it. Leaders in public worship to whom the service is a cross and a terror, do you know nothing of this unsealing of the dumb lips, this inspiration of the silent tongue? Has it not sometimes been to you like a burst of sunlight on a wintry sea? Has not the outbreak of triumphant song, in the hymn that followed, been your own irrepressible offering of thanksgiving? Youthful preachers know, or will know, what I mean.

But can not these phenomena result from the unaided working of the human mind? Oh, yes! they *can*. Sometimes, perhaps, they do. We can afford large concessions. But the point to which the Christian consciousness bears witness is, that

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commonly they are more naturally explained by the hypothesis of the real presence and the direct agency of God.

3. The Christian experience testifies also to the fact that prayer is *adequate to the achievement of results in real life which are intrinsically marvelous and improbable.* The effects which follow prayer seem often intrinsically impossible. They are not to be accounted for, except on the supposition that prayer has set in motion occult forces of immeasurable reach.

Christians very well understand that phenomenon of mystery to statesmen, — that war is singularly uncertain in its issues. Those most learned in military science are most cautious in predicting the effects of military causes. The issues of battles are often strange and inscrutable. The battle is *not* to the strong. The race is *not* to the swift. It is *not* the way of fate to favor the strongest battalions. So largely does this mystery complicate the conflicts of arms, that men make great account of what they call the *fortunes* of war. Gen. Von Moltke names as one of the four great essentials of a successful general "good luck." Such is the world's way of recognizing the fact, that there are unknown and undiscoverable powers in the universe which often defeat the campaigns of great captains. Modern armies suffer *panics*, of which the most natural explanation is the descent of invisible auxiliaries like those which scattered the army of Sennacherib in a night.

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Such facts fall in with Christian experience in prayer. The Christian consciousness understands and confirms them. They are of a piece with the individual Christian life. That is full of things similar on a smaller scale, — things which prayer seems to have called down from that secret world of spiritual causes. We believe it because we can not help it. We know it to be just like God. The sick are often restored to health in opposition to the probable course of disease. The peril of shipwreck is often averted against the probable triumph of the storm. Professional successes are often given in excess of all reasonable hopes. Deliverance is often thrust in by an unseen Hand from sudden and unlooked-for calamities. Ways of usefulness are often opened, as if by invisible allies, beyond even a young man's sanguine expectations. These things happen in apparent answer to persistent and believing prayer. No other conceivable cause of them is adequate to explain them. Christians would not be sensible men if they should refuse to recognize this divine intervention in response to prayer, as one of the laws of real life. Their experience proceeds just *as if* the promise were a real one: "He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee."

The *speed* of such responses to prayer is often a fact which it is impossible to ignore. They surprise us in the very act of prayer. Many a believer might write his own experience, almost in the very words of Daniel: "While I was yet

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speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, being caused to fly *swiftly*, touched me."

The point which, again, Christian experience would underscore, is, that the evidence of these things is all that the case admits of. It appeals to faith, as we should suppose it would do. The want of uniformity in such experiences is no greater, the failures of prayer are no more, than in the nature of the things and agencies involved we should anticipate. In number, in degree, in kind, the evidences are all that could be reasonably looked for, — no more, no less, no other.

4. If my space would permit, the fact would demand more extended notice, that the Christian consciousness of prayer and its results leaves the impression on devout minds *that prayer has command of an immense reserve of yet undeveloped resources.* Thus far it has but peered over the border of the undiscovered country. The Christian Church has but looked at it from the summit of Pisgah. Prayer suggests the existence of innumerable hosts of agencies of unknown power. Possibilities of achievement in the future seem limitless. Mountains leaping into the sea are none too strong an emblem of the realities of coming ages. This unseen, noiseless power seems not half developed, because not half used. Invisible battalions seem hovering in the air, waiting to do battle at its bidding. Occult agencies of Nature seem but its servitors. The chief thing

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which makes the moral regeneration of this world appear possible is the reality of this power with God, to which he has revealed no end in time, and no limit in the reach of its achievement.

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XXVI.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER.

Is it a living power in Christian experience? The following fragment of religious history gives answer.

A lady residing not a thousand miles from Richmond, Va., has been for many years an invalid. She is a woman of rare character, possessing more than the usual culture of educated minds, keen in her judgment, self-contained in her impulses, and very far from being, either by nature or training, a fanatic.

Being debarred by the state of her health from some of the common forms of Christian service, she has adopted the habit of *silent intercession* as a means of usefulness. With a woman's faith in God as the hearer of prayer, she has been wont to pray for everybody who has come within her reach with any special claim to her interest. Friends, acquaintances, strangers, persons whom she meets for an hour only, and has no prospect of meeting again, she quietly presents before God in prayer for whatever they seem to her to need most urgently. A stranger with whom she converses for

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a half-hour at a social gathering, a guest whom she entertains for a day, a person whose countenance impresses her in the street, a traveler in the cars whose conversation attracts her, — in brief, anybody to whom, for any reason, her attention is drawn with special regard, — she remembers in special prayer.

Probably, without having ever defined a theory about it to her own mind, she *has* the theory that whatever interests her as a child of God interests him as her Father. Prayer becomes, then, her natural method of expressing that interest to God daily, and often hourly. Communion with God expresses it as artlessly as conversation would to an earthly friend. Her daily life, therefore, is a line of telegraphic correspondence between this world and heaven, through her habit of devout intercession. Such is the simplicity of her faith in prayer as a specific power for specific effects, that she accepts it as a method, and perhaps the chief method, of her own usefulness. She trusts it implicitly: she uses it expectantly. Does God, then, disappoint her in the result? The following is believed to be one of many incidents in her experience which answers the question.

A few years ago two strangers entered the car in which she was a traveler, and seated themselves so near her that she could not avoid overhearing their conversation. In the remarks of one of them she soon became intensely interested. She inferred from them that he was an impenitent

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man, and for some reason supremely unhappy. This was sufficient to enlist her prayerful desires in his behalf. He became at once the subject of her intercessory converse with God. When she left the cars, that face, so full of the suffering of a turbulent spirit, remained with her. For weeks afterward something moved her to pray for that stranger, that he might find peace in Christ. As time passed on, her special interest in him gave place to more recent objects of supplication, and she thought no more about him. She had dropped the tribute of her prayers into the troubled current of his life, and left both it and him with God.

Some years afterward she visited, hundreds of miles distant from her home, a friend who invited her to go and hear a celebrated preacher who had been laboring there with success. She went. When the preacher rose in the pulpit, she instantly recognized the face of the stranger who had years before so deeply moved her sympathy in the cars, — a face now no longer clouded by the disquiet of an impenitent spirit, but radiant with the joy of one who knew the peace of Christ, and was striving to impart it to other souls.

At the time of their first meeting he was, indeed, of all men one of the most miserable, — crushed by affliction, but not subdued in heart; quickened by the Spirit of God, yet resolute in sin; with eyes opened to his lost state, but blind to the gift of a Saviour; whirled in the great crisis of his moral destiny, which comes but once to any

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man, yet without God, and having no hope; both worlds shrouded by the very blackness of darkness. Few men have ever needed prayer more sorely than he did in that juncture. It was one of those emergencies of moral conflict in which it is *like God* to interpose with a singular rescue. The appearance of the stranger now in a Christian pulpit tells the issue. His conversion had followed within the year, his proximity to his praying fellow-traveler in the cars.

This narrative illustrates the way in which God often intertwines his own sovereign providence with human sympathies and believing prayers, in the network of instrumentalities for the conversion of a soul. The death of a friend breaks down the strong man in his career of worldly success. The inherited faith of his youth, representing who can say how many or how mighty prayers of a godly ancestry, is set on fire in his heart by the breath of God. Then follow months of impenitent remorse; and, when the conflict is deepening into despair, there glides in among the spiritual forces a gentle stranger, praying in the morning, and at noonday, and at eventide, for she knows not whom.

We can not say what precisely was the office assigned to that stranger's intercession in the plan of God. We coolly pronounce the event a coincidence. Yes; but is that all? Unwritten religious history is too full of such coincidences to allow us to leave it there. Must we not believe

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that woman's prayers to have been one link in the chain of spiritual causes? Why not a link as necessary as the bereavement to that soul's salvation? Were not both the working-out of one purpose? He and she, unknown to each other, met for an hour just then and there, and parted. No word passed between them! How insignificant the meeting. A hundred such occurred that same hour on that same train of cars. The rumbling of the wheels seems to have more meaning in it. But the momentary junction of those two lives inclosed God's hidden decree. They may never be known to each other in this world. But who shall say that it was not that woman's secret intercession which turned the tide of conflict for that soul's deliverance? May it not have been her mission to stretch forth over that scene of spiritual contest the scepter of a prince who had power with God, and to beckon invisible forces to the rescue?

May not thousands of unwritten Christian biographies at the last disclose such divine "coincidences"? Possibly such results may reveal the chief reason why many an invalid life is prolonged. Very useless, and worse than that to the sufferer's view, such a life often appears. Yet it may be privileged to do the work of angels. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?" What if the whole visible universe be closed to our slow feet and trembling hands, if the invisible is open to wings of prayer?

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XXVII.

HINTS AUXILIARY TO FAITH IN PRAYER.

THE very magnitude of some truths breaks down our faith in them as realities. "Too good to be true" is the proverbial expression of our incredulity. Prayer stands at the head of those powers which by their greatness cause faith to reel before them. We need all the helps to faith in it which truth will warrant.

1. Among other things, we need to realize the fact that prayer is a *spiritual force*. It is not subject to the laws which govern the material elements. Fire, water, wind, electricity, light, even the most impalpable of material forces, bear no comparison with it. It springs from the depths of the human spirit; it deals mainly with things of the spirit; it reaches to the Spirit of God. From its inception to its result, it belongs to the spiritual universe. It is subject, therefore, to none of the drawbacks and limitations which restrict material things. In its working there is nothing corresponding to friction in mechanic force, or to the *vis inertiæ* in the movement of the planets. Even what we call the "laws of nature" are subordi-

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nate to the laws of prayer. "Say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done." We loose ourselves from heavy chains of unbelief, if we once grasp and hold the full meaning of the fact that prayer is a spiritual power. Among those subject to the human will, it stands at the head of immaterial forces.

2. Specially does it assist our faith in the chronic struggle with earth-bound senses, if we realize to ourselves the fact that prayer is *independent of the limitations of space and time.*

Modern discovery and invention have given to the human mind new conceptions of the possibilities of material forces, through their approach to the annihilation of space and time. Steam, the telegraph, the telephone, the telescope, have created ideas of power which once the world would have called supernatural. Men have probably been hanged as witches for the discovery of the germs of modern science. But prayer is a force which surpasses all possibilities of science.

In a tempest at Cape Horn, when a captain, with the aid of a speaking-trumpet, can not make his crew hear his orders at a distance of ten feet, prayer in a woman's whisper can be heard beyond the stars. Space is as if it were not. Nature takes countless ages to construct a vein of anthracite. But, while a praying man is yet speaking, his thought has gone up to the mind of God, has done its mysterious mission there, and has returned

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again, and touched his lips with a live coal. Prayerful thought annihilates time more masterfully than electricity. We gain something in the struggle of faith with sense, if in any most homely ways we can realize to ourselves the subjection of time and space to this invisible and noiseless agent of the unseen. Oceans have no place in its geography. Centuries have no record in its history.

3. We find an auxiliary to faith in prayer, in the fact, that, under God's direction, *it commands the resources of angelic agency to the help of man.* "He shall give his angels charge over thee." "Are they not all ministering spirits?" They come in response to prayer. No other power that we know of reaches the innumerable hosts of angelic ministers of God. Science yet wonders whether it can ever establish intelligible communication with the nearest of the fixed stars. But what is that in comparison with a power which enters heaven, and brings legions of superhuman forces to the aid and comfort of a praying woman? In Daniel's vision, Gabriel "flies *swiftly*," at the bidding of God, in answer to one human voice. A hundred and eighty-five thousand fighting men were once slaughtered in a night, by an angel of the Lord, for the deliverance of a Hebrew prince, in answer to one prayer. Twelve legions of angels were once to be had for the asking by a suffering man. This command of prayer over superhuman allies is one of the commonplaces of its history in the biblical record of its achievements. Can we

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enter into the spirit of this phenomenon without a deepened sense of the reality of our power with God?

4. It helps us vastly to realize what prayer is, if we admit to our faith *its supremacy over Satan.* The Bible magnifies, more than we in our modern thought do, the reality of a great and fearful adversary of souls. He is a living and personal being. He is the prince of this world. Tempted souls are in mysterious bondage to him. The air is full of his spiritual minions and allies. Their name is "legion." Under conditions of conflict with these invisible foes, human probation goes on.

Yet over against this league of satanic forces there stands at every man's will the superior strategy of prayer. This is the only human power which equals that of Satan. This is the only one which Satan fears. This shuts up the gates of hell. The conquest of Guido's archangel over the Dragon is repeated, the world over, in the voiceless utterances of praying men and women. At the bidding of a praying child this prince of the power of the air stands aghast, and turns, and flees away.

The assembled cabinet of a Spanish monarch once fled in dismay from the council-chamber, crossing themselves devoutly, in terror at a piece of clock-work so ingenious and inexplicable in its mechanism, that they thought it must be the invention of the devil. When the properties of phosphorus were first discovered, many

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wise men believed it to be a product of hell. Superstition has not yet ceased to tremble at things which it attributes to satanic devices. But the real agencies of Satan are more fearful than such things as these would indicate. They are no superannuated fancies and exploded dreams. They are among the revealed realities of the spiritual universe. They take hold on souls, and open the gates of everlasting despair. And the only thing at the command of men which can always and everywhere hold successful conflict with them is the power of prayer. Nothing else gives to tempted men and women the mastery over demoniac foes. And this, in the mouth of a child, can do that. At the bidding of a praying soul Satan moves very quickly. He *flees*. Such is the usual story of his defeat in the Scriptures. The wings of the wind can not bear him swiftly enough from the presence of a praying believer. "I saw Satan fall from heaven." Does it not uplift our sense of the dignity of prayer as a power of conquest, when we admit to our faith the fact of its overwhelming conquests of demoniac battalions?

5. We find an ally to our faith in the reality of prayer in the fact, that *it is always seconded by the Lord Jesus Christ.* No believer ever prays alone. In the solitude of African wilds, Dr. Livingstone had an infinite companion. In mid-ocean, no shipwrecked sailor ever prays without a Friend at hand. *We* have an Advocate with the Father. The only-beloved Son of God gives his indorse-

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XXVIII.

THE VISION OF CHRIST.

DANNECKER, the German sculptor, occupied eight years upon a marble statue of Christ. He had previously exercised his genius upon subjects taken from the Greek and Roman mythology, and had won a great reputation. The celebrated statue of Ariadne, in the garden of Herr Bethman at Frankfort, is his work. Critics of art have given him rank with Michael Angelo and Canova.

When he had labored two years upon his statue of Christ, the work was apparently finished. He called into his studio a little girl, and, directing her attention to the statue, asked her, "Who is that?" She replied, "A great man." The artist turned away disheartened. His artistic eye had been deceived. He had failed, and his two years of labor were thrown away. But he began anew; and, after another year or two had passed, he again invited the child into his studio, and repeated the inquiry, "Who is that?" This time he was not disappointed. After looking in silence for a while, her curiosity deepened into awe and thankfulness; and, bursting into tears, she said in

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in God." "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Such words, if they mean any thing, mean something unutterably great. It is no prerogative of an elect few. The lowliest not less than the loftiest life may have this element of an infinite dignity. A profoundly prayerful life is by that single feature of it lifted into sympathy with God. A mean thing can not be made noble by it, but a small thing can be made great. The work of a laundress or a bricklayer may attract the respect of angels.

Hugh Miller, when working at his trade as a stone-mason, used to say that his was a grand calling, because the routine of it gave to a first-class workman so much time and mental force for silent communion with God. It was in such communion that he laid the foundation of that dignity of character which afterward made him the companion of philosophers and the instructor of princes. It matters little what may be a man's employment in life. The whole life is ennobled and adorned by it if it is done as in a vision of Christ. "In His Name" was the watchword of the Waldenses, and their form of salutation when they met and when they parted. It expressed their supreme idea of life, and of all that made it worth living. They said it at their weddings, and repeated it at their funerals. It was their formula in baptism and at the Lord's Supper, and it lifted to the same altitude of dignity their work in their fields and vineyards. When have wise men ever discovered

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XXIX.

THE CROSS IN THE DOOR.

PROBABLY it is not commonly known that we all have in our dwellings a relic of mediæval piety which may stir the Puritan blood in the veins of some of us. Our ancestors, if their attention had been called to it, would, perhaps, have exorcised it from every Puritan home, with stern ceremony of prayer and practical reform, if not by the ordeal of fire.

The upper half of the paneling of doors, till recently universal in our domestic architecture, represents the form of a Roman cross. Remove the panels, and the cross is there complete and in exact proportions. Many have doubtless observed the fact, and perhaps with a momentary chastening of feeling at the thought suggested. Some, who have more than the average degree of susceptibility to the impressions of material symbols, have probably been quite willing to recognize the undesigned memento; yet they might never have cared to originate it. Has it not sometimes prompted ejaculatory prayer?

Such was, in fact, its original purpose. It was

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tion of all depended; and the same token was one of the first images to greet the eye in the morning. The Christian home, however lowly, if it rose to the dignity of paneled doors and transom-windows, was thus crowded with reproductions of the symbol which the sensitive religious temperament of the age made sacred to all, and which often brought tears to the eyes of many. By such expedients did our fathers strive to make the great thoughts of the Christian faith a pervasive presence with themselves and their children.

It is a singular fact, that this amiable relic of those bygone times — one hesitates to call them superstitious times — escaped entirely the iconoclasm of the reformers. While Genevan and Dutch and Scotch zealots, with hammer and broad-axe and firebrand, were annihilating the cathedral churches, stripping them of cross and crucifix and saintly image, and were even exorcising from the spires, as an invention of the Devil, the most comely and pertinent symbol of their and our theory of prayer, and, as if themselves outwitted by the Devil, were substituting in place of the cross those horrible satires on Protestant Christianity, the weather-vane and the cockerel, in their own homes, scattered everywhere before their very eyes, was the abhorred object of their fury on every door and in every transom-window. It still existed two years ago in the door of John Knox's study in Edinburgh. The stern old man could not help seeing it every time he raised his

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XXX.

THE PREMATURE CLOSING OF A LIFE'S WORK.

"It is a great mystery. I have prayed for that golden setting of life's sun which attends an *old* man's usefulness when prolonged to the very grave. God denies my prayer. I am thrust aside at the age of forty-two. I seem to myself like a candle blown out by a puff of wind." Such was the lamentation, to a friend, of one who was arrested in his life's work by incurable disease in middle life. He was one of many whose discipline takes this mysterious form. Are there any reasons for it which can light up the darkness of the trial?

1. We can see, that, in the lives of us all, *physical laws* are at work which predestine life's decline and end, and which can not, in God's wise planning of a man's destiny, be disregarded. "Every man's life is a plan of God." But as such it hangs upon other plans which have gone before it. It includes inherited tendencies, and *drifts* of disease which foredoom the body to its dissolution at its appointed time. We live in grand lines of inheritance. These run too far back, and involve the action of too many progenitors, known and

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It is something to be able to see an inexplicable trial thus hiding itself in the infinity of God.

2. It is noticeable also, that, in the experience of some of these early doomed men, *their whole life has been marked by prematurity.* The end is but the natural sequence of the beginning. They were precocious children. They learned the alphabet at a sitting. They could read the Bible when but four years old. Their memory goes back to the later half of their second year. One such read "Edwards on the Will" at twelve years of age. In college they led their seniors. They began their public life, as William Pitt did, in their minority. I have in mind one clergyman of this class who died at sixty, and his friends lamented his early end; but he preached his first sermon while yet a minor, and old men who heard it were captivated by its eloquence. Forty solid years measured his ministry. The late Dr. Joseph P. Thompson was one of these early developed and early crowned ones.

Now, it is in graceful keeping with such a career, that it should end prematurely, for it began so. The fruit which is early "set" ripens early, and falls while another is yet green. Such men may have done a long life's work at the age of sixty. Forty years are a long service. What matters it whether it ranges from the age of twenty to that of sixty, or from that of thirty to that of three-score and ten? The real rounding of one's life, and the "finishing" of one's "course" in sym-

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that tribute to a religion of peace and good will to men he preferred an eminent civilian to an eminent warrior. Military prestige is not in God's plans what it is in the plans of men.

Yet it does not appear that King Solomon was a better man than his royal father. His wisdom amazed the Queen of Sheba; yet the man whom God had called from the sheepfold to the throne was the "man after God's own heart." Perhaps all the reasons for preferring Solomon for that one service are not known. Enough is it, that, for reasons which satisfied God, he *was* preferred. It is something, yes, much, to see signs of God's *sovereign* election in such an unlooked-for, and, as we should say, eccentric allotment of the man to the work, and of the work to the man.

Do we not sometimes see similar tokens of sovereignty in God's planning of the lives of other good men? They are *peremptorily* stopped in their career of usefulness. The work so dear to them, never dearer than now, is passed over to the hands of others. When every thing promises to them prolonged success, and the winding-up of their career by some achievement of signal value to the world, they come suddenly against a wall of adamant. They are shut in, can not take another step onward. They are taken from a career of splendid usefulness, and laid on a bed of languishing, from which they never rise to be the men they were before. A pastor is taken from a loved and loving people, to whom, it should seem

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and done the work preparatory to the success. I read not long ago of an application to the State for charity to the old age of the discoverer of gold in California. The most successful preachers are large debtors to their predecessors. An evangelist whom worshiping converts throng is always a reaper of the fruit of the toil of one or more hard-worked, overworked, and, it may be, discouraged, pastors. The one is famous from ocean to ocean: the others — who are they? The world knows not, and does not care to know.

This transmission of work and its reward is one of the mysteries which human wisdom can not pursue to its ultimate reasons. But it is something to see that one is not solitary in the discipline. There is enough of the child left in us all to make us glad that we are not alone in the dark. It is more to see, that, in such a trial, one belongs to a goodly company. One joins hands with great and good men of whom the world is not worthy. Kings, prophets, psalmists, apostles, martyrs, all the illustrious classes of workers in God's estimate of the universe, have among them men who say, and perhaps not altogether sadly, "I have laid the foundation, and others have built thereon." Above all, it is superlatively cheering to be able to follow such a mystery till it loses itself in the fathomless depths of God's thought. If a thing is *so* strange that nothing short of infinite wisdom can explain it, there is joy in being the divinely chosen subject of it.

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yond forty years of active service. After that period, the tide of life ebbs: vitality runs low. Then a man begins to be called "venerable." The world reveres him for what he has been and done: it does not hang upon him as a necessity to its future. The aged good men are, with few exceptions, emeritus. In public office, or out of it, it makes little difference. Not a little evil often offsets, in part, the good they do. How opinionated we become as years multiply! How wise we are above younger men! How loftily we look down on the rising generation! How sublimely we patronize our juniors! Or, worse than that, how set we are against improvements which they originate! and therefore how hard it often is for them to get along with us! They are tempted sometimes to ask whether our places are not worth more than we are. Is this humiliating to us? Yes; but we had better see it as it is. The drift of old age is in this direction. We had better know this long before we come to the trial; for then the chance is that we shall refuse to know it. "To this complexion we must come at last." It is easy to resolve against it in early manhood, as President Edwards did, and as, perhaps, all thoughtful men do; but how few adhere to the resolution when the strong current of life runs backward! It runs with reduplicated swiftness as the decline of life approaches the last valley.

This and other almost inevitable infirmities of age may be the reason why God sets aside old

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to himself, and gives to an imperiled world the young life, because it needs that. Who are we that we should presume to withstand or to cavil at so benign an ordinance? Let us rejoice rather that we do not have the ordering of such things. Let us bid God-speed to our successors, and say "All hail!" to the coming generations. Let us uplift our own eye to that world where years are not counted. If youth here is so glad a thing, what must the immortal youth be? What plans of service, what untiring labors, what swift achievements, what immeasurable successes, are awaiting us there!

5. The mystery we are considering, in common with all other dark things in God's administration of affairs, suggests further, as one of its possible reasons, the *vast and complicated reticulation of human with angelic interests and activities.* Much that is dark to us here may become luminous when seen in the light of the interests of other worlds. This is a great universe which God has to care for. We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses. There is enough in the life of *one* redeemed sinner to attract a convoy of angels in awe-struck study. May it not be for their sake, in some way, that one man is taken and another left? Who can tell? But who can tell that it is not so? Any other than the order of things which God has chosen might jar upon the angelic sense of wisdom, and awaken questions which could not be answered, nor yet wisely left unanswered. Of this we can say but little, because we know but

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neglect the spiritual nutrition of his own soul in the intellectual struggle to provide food for theirs. I understand it now.

Why is it that some good men must go down life's last decade with the tottering limbs of a second infancy? Sad, unspeakably sad, is that comment which we sometimes have to make upon one whom the world has honored with its trust in high places: "He *has been* a learned man, a wise man, a great man; but now"— So strange a humiliation of a great mind and an heir of God must have something to do with its preparation for an immortal youth. "Except ye become as little children." Some may not be able to become that, except through the vale of second childhood. That earthly silence may be the great opportunity preparative to fitness for a service in the coming life, compared with which the grandest service of this life is but infantile. The sleep of the chrysalis is the forerunner of golden glory. If one can but believe that God's plan is made up of such inspiring mysteries! Yet why not? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard." Sin and its consequences have no concern with that. They are buried beneath the glory that is to be revealed. Why should we not believe that God's reasons for things are *like him?* "It must be his doing," as Charles Kingsley said, "because it is so strange and so painful." None but an infinite mind could plan some things as they are in the lives of us all, and yet make them come out right in the end.

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1. That life will be *emancipation from a dying, and, in its best state, a restrictive body.* This is certain. Whatever else takes place at death, we shall surely leave this covered skeleton. We shall no longer look out upon God's universe through dying eyes, nor get the major part of our knowledge of it through the discipline of pain. One of Quarles's "Emblems of Life" is a child peering sadly out between the ribs of a skeleton bare and dead. That emblem we shall smile at as belonging to a past world. To thousands of sufferers this will be a glad escape. Think what it must be to the blind, the deaf, the crippled, — to Laura Bridgman! "Let me pass *out*" were the significant dying words of one believer, which I find upon her tombstone.

The *restrictions* of sense will cease. We shall exchange pain for ease, weariness for strength, confinement for freedom. To those who have long since forgotten what the sensations of health are, this is a glad assurance. Said one of the saints, who for years had not known a painless hour, when asked what was his most vivid conception of heaven, "Freedom from palpitation of the heart." His whole being had been so long absorbed in conflict with that form of suffering, that to be rid of it was often all the heaven he had strength to think of. Who of us, if at peace with God, does not sometimes exult in this thought: "One thing I know: whatever else is before me, I am going out of this worn-out body, to be shut up in it no more for ever"?

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its most irrepressible and bounding overflow of energies, is a more truthful emblem still. "The immortals," said the old Greeks, "are always young." With a surer faith may we believe this of the condition of a redeemed spirit in the life to come. We have no reason to mourn over departed youth. That form of the world's elegiac poetry is destined to become obsolete. Our real youth is beyond the stars.

3. The evidence is not small, that, in a life free from the limitations of sense, *the soul's natural dominion over material things will be grandly developed.* Mind will probably be independent of the veto of matter. Our Lord seems to have possessed the power of passing through material obstructions without a rent or a break. Through closed doors and dense walls he passed with the ease of thought. Through angry crowds, whose every eye was fixed upon him, he slipped away invisibly. Was this miracle? Even so, it may have been only an anticipation of the natural sovereignty of soul over matter. Angelic intelligences seem to have the same supremacy over material forms, assuming them and dropping them at will. All the biblical hints of the life natural to spiritual being look to this as one of its conditions. They suggest the query, whether mind, after all, is not the only substance, and matter the shadow. This is at least less improbable than the glum faith of materialism.

Trifling as this is as a matter of speculation only, it is fraught with magnificent probabilities

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but not a whisper of "the Oversoul," "the Soul of the Universe," "the Spirit of the Whole," and "the Ocean of Being," — whatever these may mean. These did not put in an appearance on the Mount of Transfiguration. Dives and Lazarus made no such discoveries. We shall, in that life, be *more* distinctly conscious of what we are, not less so. Memory will be more truthfully historic. Conscience will be more intensely self-revealing. Friends must be outlined to our vision more vividly, and therefore more lovingly. Stereoscopic sight is but a faint emblem of the vision which souls will there have of each other and of themselves.

Never was a more causeless doubt suggested to plague afflicted ones than that concerning the non-recognition of friends in heaven. Few are pestered with it who drink deep of the spirit of the Bible. If the question had been asked of our Lord by the loved disciple, — no, he would never have asked it; by Thomas, rather, — I fancy that the Master would have answered, "If it were not so, I would have told you." It is one of those truths of which the spirit of his silence is, "That is a thing of course: waste no thought upon a doubt of it. It belongs to the alphabet of the immortal life. So sure is it, so deep laid in the nature of souls, that I have not thought it needful to affirm it. You will one day smile at the ignorance which could question it."

5. As the fruit of such changed conditions of

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awe-struck reverence. It will still an affrighted conscience. All the retributive elements of the soul will return to their original province, — that of making sympathy with God possible, in waves and billows of ecstatic emotion, of which we have now no conception. Probably in no other way than by this humanized discovery of God in Christ could souls with a history of sin behind see God, and live.

6. *The occupations of that life. What are they?* If, in respect to the marriage relation, we shall be "as the angels," why not like them in their busy and tireless activities of benevolence? Are they not all ministering spirits? What else can expanded faculties, and deepened sensibilities, and immortal youth, and conscious sinlessness, find to do in a universe swayed by the mighty pulsations of the love of God? Sabbatic worship as pictured in St. John's Apocalypse must surely be symbolic. The heavenly choir must be an emblem, rather than a literal picture. Life in heaven can be no statuesque existence. Emblem of what? Of the gladness, of the spontaneity, of the purity, and of the dignity, of untiring and diversified *service*. We shall mount up on wings, as eagles. In proportion to our capacities of service, and our sympathy with the great heart-throb of a loving universe, we shall be employed as ministers of God. Some of us will be swift messengers. Kings and priests we shall be. We shall reign with Christ. What this means we know not, except

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In prayer she often seemed inspired. Yet she died silently. She succumbed to disease as an infant does, as speechlessly and as trustfully. Most of us must be content with this. We shall not, probably, hear harps of angels, nor see shining forms flitting across streets of gold and over walls of sapphire. We are not likely to find on *this* side of the river loved hands stretched out in welcome. God will not, probably, work a miracle to improve upon the constitutional make which he gave us at our creation. Nor do we know that spiritual sight before the time could be an improvement. We have only to accept with contented faith the knowledge which reason and revelation give us of the unseen life, and ask ourselves, "Is it homelike to us? Does our present character fit in well with its lofty and pure attractions?" What we *are* in our gracious sympathies and affinities is more vital than what we *know* of things invisible.

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